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THE MODERN PARSON

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BY
G. K. A. BELL
DEAN OF CANTERBURY

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PREFACE

THIS book is based on a series of Lectures on Pastoral Theology delivered in Cambridge in the winter 1926–27, by invitation of the Divinity Professors; with the addition of a chapter on Clerical Subscription. It is an attempt to give some account of the work of a clergyman in the modern world. It deals, therefore, both with the new social and religious situation, and also with the opportunities which await a man of sympathy and imagination. These opportunities are not only surprisingly large and varied, but such as to call out the very best in the best men. Indeed, they require the best men, in many cases, if they are to be used at all. The third and fourth chapters treat specially of the opportunities in a parish; and the fifth of the many varieties of work which are non-parochial in character.

I have tried to suggest that the calling of a clergyman is a great calling, and such as to appeal to men of the highest gifts; and I have also done what I can to show that the right spirit in which to work is the spirit of willingness to learn and of co-operation. Further, in the present day there is a great deal of talk of the pressure of materialism,

that is of a materialist way of life. Men are in danger (to use a phrase of Dean Church) of "putting or dropping out of sight the supreme value of the spiritual part of man." One of the chief tasks of the Church is to insist on this supreme value, with all its consequences, and it is this, as I have tried to make plain throughout the book, which the modern parson, as the minister of Christ, should make the main motive of his ministry. It is in the carrying out of this task that he shows himself the true *pontifex*, or bridge-maker, and also the true "opener of doors," the doors between the classes, the doors between nations, the doors of friendship with men and of communion with God.

G. K. A. BELL.

Canterbury,
December, 1927.

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THE MODERN PARSON

CHAPTER I

THE SOCIAL BACKGROUND

I HAVE chosen The Modern Parson as the title for these lectures because I wish to speak, not so much of the general qualities of the parson's vocation, as of the modern world in which those who are parsons at this present day are called to work. Many others have spoken with great authority of the character of a priest; of the self-discipline which he must practice; of his inner life; and of numberless things besides which are vital to his equipment as a steward of the mysteries of Christ. It is my purpose rather to dwell on the conditions with which he is faced in this new age; the opportunities which the actual circumstances of our own time open out; the problems which they present; and (a point which I am sure is insufficiently remembered) the diversities of his ministrations and the many channels for the exercise of his priesthood.

I do not indeed forget that the minister of Jesus Christ is the minister of an eternal gospel, or that in its essential character that gospel is rightly described as unchanging. But the truth which I would emphasise is this: The men and women to whom Christ's word is spoken change; the conditions in which they live and are brought up change with them. There are changes of thought; changes of language; changes of habit; changes of a social and political character. And all these things are bound to affect, not the essence of the gospel, but the manner of its expression, the method of its presentation, and surely they must also, to some degree, great or small, affect the mental attitude and the general equipment of the men to whom its preaching is entrusted.

But let me say at once that however much I shall speak about modern conditions, however much I shall endeavour to emphasise the influence or the appeal of his material environment, I want to look upon the parson or priest as, before all else, the minister of Jesus Christ, a steward of mysteries, a man of God. Just as the gospel is eternal, there is an eternal element in the ordained man who bears the gospel. He is an agent of the supernatural, commissioned to bring the peace and presence of God to mankind.

I

In this first lecture I propose to speak of the modern situation in its social aspect. All ages

have seen social changes, many of them great and important. But I think we can claim that there has been a greater rapidity and a larger volume of such change in the last hundred years than in any other similar period of English history. The main external cause, no doubt, is the industrial revolution, and all that it implies. It has speeded up the whole course of our social development. "Up to the Industrial Revolution," writes a modern historian,* "economic and social change, though continuous, has the pace of a slowly moving stream; but in the days of Watt and Stephenson it acquired the momentum of water over a mill dam, disturbing to the eye of a spectator. Nor, for all its hurry, does it ever reach any pool at the bottom and resume its former leisurely advance. It is a cataract still."

Many books have been written on the immediate and remote effects of this tremendous event. I will simply point out one or two results or accompaniments which have a special interest to us. And let me mention first the vast difference it has made in mere population.

The earliest rumblings of the new forces of machinery and capitalised industry were heard during the opening years of George III in (for I dare not say by) a loosely organised aristocratic society absorbed in politics and literature. By the end of the reign the population of the country had practically doubled, rising from 7,000,000 to 14,000,000 inhabitants. And when I remind

**History of England.* G. M. Trevelyan. (1926). p. 601.

you that the population of this island had only increased by 2,500,000 in the two hundred and fifty years between Doomsday (1086) and the Black Death (1349), and that it had taken four hundred years to rise from 4,000,000 souls in 1349 to 7,000,000 in 1760, you will perceive the vastness of the increase. The addition was, I need not tell you, mainly to the populations of the towns, whether old or new: and though I must be careful to point out that it was not due solely to the improved standard of living and improvements in medical science, aided by the new mechanical inventions and the cheap goods which they produced, but was also due to an increase in the crude birth-rate and earlier marriages, it remains true that the former were the more significant factors in the matter.*

The increase which was so marked in the beginning of George III's reign has gone on continuously ever since. And in the hundred years between the census of 1821 and the census of 1921 the population has trebled, rising for England, Scotland and Wales from 14,091,257 in the former year to 42,767,530 in the later census, a figure about which I shall have something to say before this lecture ends.

II

Now population, and especially an industrial population, cannot increase at this pace without

**History of England.* Trevelyan. p. 602.

some effect on the political system. And the growth of democracy in the form of representative Government is the second product of the Industrial Revolution to which I would call your attention as the clergy of to-morrow. Before 1832 the landlords alone formed the representatives of the nation in Parliament. The first Reform Act passed in that year extended the franchise to the middle classes and the tenant farmers. That was the beginning on which further representation was built up. In 1867 the working classes in the towns, and in 1884 the agricultural labourers, were accorded votes, and the last stage, by which women and practically the whole of the remaining men became electors to Parliament, was as recent as 1918.

This, like the increase of population, is an extraordinary development different from anything that had happened in our country before. No doubt the French Revolution and the ideas to which it gave birth had some responsibility for the transformation, besides the Industrial Revolution. But, after all, we had already been through Revolutions of our own, in 1642 and 1688, and they had not brought a share in parliamentary legislation anywhere within the reach of the working classes. The Revolution which sent the new social and political ideas flooding through men's minds began on the economic plane. And while economic causes have always had a very great deal to do below the surface with the main events of history, it is, may we not fairly say, since the Industrial Revolution, that is, in the last 160

years, that the economic connections between different events, the economic roots of prosperity and distress, and social and international unrest, and class war and the war of nations, have begun to come out into the clear light of day.

It is unnecessary, I think, that I should hammer in the significance of this political development for the ministry of a modern parson. You will at once see that men called upon to exercise their priesthood among those who have a direct share in the government of the country and who can decide the policy of the nation on some great issue raised at a General Election, have a task which, I will not say gives graver responsibilities, but certainly makes a greater demand upon their devotion, their courage, and their intellectual ability than the task set the clergy in a community where not only the working classes but the vast majority of the nation had no direct political power. And you will also see that when men perceive the important part played in social life by economic factors there is a new call to witness to spiritual things and to see that economics, which after all are themselves spiritual things, are not emptied of the Spirit but controlled by it.

While I am speaking of changes of a political character, let me say one other word of a general kind about the democratization of our forms of government in a field which in some ways touches us more nearly still. For many of us, no doubt, the doings of Parliament at Westminster, except when matters of an acutely controversial nature

come to the fore, are apt to seem somewhat remote. We have our votes, and it is to be hoped we exercise them every five years. But, except at an election, we are not brought into immediate contact with the House of Commons. Hence the importance of local administration. In the local community in which each of us lives the citizen has far greater opportunity for exercising any powers which the law may allow for the development of the common life. When, therefore, three years after the Reform Act, another Act of Parliament in 1835 established organizations of the residents in each locality for the purpose of satisfying their common needs under the name of "Municipal Corporations" a further step of the utmost importance was taken. I shall say something about co-operation with the local government in my third lecture. But the point on which I want to dwell now is this. By Act of Parliament a Local Council of citizens in Urban and Rural area alike, regularly and freely elected, is sometimes empowered, sometimes obliged, at the expense of the citizens in the area, to provide such services as education, sanitation, police, the prevention and treatment of destitution, the organization of employment, the care of the aged and the sick, the feeding and medical treatment of children, the building of houses, the making of roads, the organization of transport, and much besides. And it has been said by a competent social historian that if you wish to estimate the result of all this democratization of municipal government on society you

must compare the typical, i.e., the most influential figures of earlier stages of development, with the typical figures of to-day. Thus "The typical figure of the England of the Middle Ages was the lord of the manor; the dominant types of the England of a century ago were the improving landlord and the capitalist mill-owner; the most characteristic personages of the England of the twentieth century are the elected councillor, the elementary schoolmaster, the school-doctor, and the borough engineer."* These words of Mr. Sidney Webb put in a very striking and vivid way, it seems to me, the immensity of the change with which the modern parson is faced. It is difficult to realise it. It is very difficult to change one's perspective in looking at society, or to pierce below the appearance of the social order to the reality. We are a conservative country, and are likely, for a long while yet, to pay reverence to rank and traditional position as well as to large wealth. But in spite of the indirect influence of social prestige in landlord or peer, in spite of the more direct and often very great power of the large industrialist, the work of the elected councillor, the elementary and secondary schoolmaster, the medical officer of health, and the city surveyor, touches more of the daily life of the large masses of our population than those others can touch. And though often you may think them very unimportant people when you see them, because they make perhaps little personal show,

**Towards Social Democracy? A Study of Social Evolution during the past three-quarters of a century.* Sidney Webb. 1916.

they are really your kings. And it is only right that you, who are the priests of the people, should recognise what they mean.

III

The Industrial Revolution, as I have already said, was followed by a very substantial increase in population. It was inevitable that, sooner or later, this large increase in population should involve great changes in the political system. So an extension of the franchise has meant, as it could not help meaning, a very considerable extension of education. And this third social change, the last which I wish to put before you, is in some ways the most important factor of all in the situation with which the modern parson has to deal.

The years since the Industrial Revolution have witnessed an immense advance in the provision of education in the formal sense of the word. "It has been estimated," writes Dr. Marvin in *A Century of Hope*, "that the condition of our 'public' or higher schools was worse between 1750 and 1840 than at any time since King Alfred. The grammar schools were largely derelict, often scandalous. Sometimes for half a century or more only half a dozen boys might have attended the school at some large centre of population."* As for our Universities prior to 1800, according to Newman there was hardly

**A Century of Hope.* F. S. Marvin. (1919). p. 204.

any education at all given to the generality of youth committed to their keeping. "Early in the reign of George III" (I quote from Trevelyan's *British History in the Nineteenth Century*), "a foreign visitor witnessed with amazement the Oxford examination as it was then conducted: 'The Presiding Examiner, the Candidate for a degree and the three Opponents came into the Schools and, amid profound silence, passed the statutory time in the study of a novel or other entertaining work.'"* And Gibbon, who was at Oxford at the worst period, delivered a terrible indictment of what were then the only two Universities, blaming for most of their iniquity the clerical monopoly of teaching, though (let me add for your comfort) "Cambridge," he says, "appears to have been less deeply infected than her sister with the vices of the Cloyster." I say nothing of primary education for the working classes, for, in our sense of the word, at that time it hardly existed.

Since 1800 and 1840, however, and still more conspicuously during quite recent years, an Educational Revolution has taken place. In primary education the decisive step was taken in the Education Act of 1870 (three years after the Reform Act of 1867). Up to that time there were only voluntary schools, built largely by Churchmen and by the British and Foreign Schools Society and aided by a small State Grant. By the new Act publicly controlled schools were introduced, and the foundation laid

**British History in the Nineteenth Century.* (1922). p. 26.

of a national system, a school being placed within the reach of every child at a very low charge. The general school leaving age was ten. In 1876 Primary education was made compulsory. In 1891 it was offered free of all cost. In 1893 the lower limit of the school leaving age was raised to eleven —in 1899 to twelve—in 1900 to thirteen. In 1918 (almost simultaneously with the Representation of the People Act) the Fisher Act raised the school-leaving age to fourteen everywhere, and now all children between five and fourteen (or if there is a By-law in certain cases between six and fourteen) are required by law to receive " efficient elementary instruction in reading, writing and arithmetic." Before 1870 about 1,250,000 children were receiving some form of education, i.e., about half the children of the country. In 1925–26, according to the Board of Education's *Statistics* for that year, 5,631,560 children were receiving elementary education in England and Wales (of whom 3,638,183 were in Council Schools and 1,993,377 in Voluntary schools).

The present century has seen an advance at least as remarkable in secondary education. A secondary school is "a school for pupils who intend to remain for at least four years and up to at least the age of sixteen." It must provide adequate instruction in the English language and literature, at least one language other than English, Geography, History, Mathematics, Science, Drawing, Singing, Manual Instruction in the case of boys, Domestic Subjects in the case of girls, Physical Exercises and Organised Games. Secondary

education received a great impetus from the Education Act of 1902; and from that time onwards a large number of County and Municipal Secondary Schools have been established, receiving a large number of their pupils as free-place scholars from the Public Elementary Schools, while the fees from those who pay are as low as £12 12*s.* 0*d.* a year for a really first class education. To give you an example of the rapidity of development in this field the number of secondary schools in England and Wales on the Grant list in 1907–8 was 843, and in 1925–6 it was 1,301, while the number of pupils in these schools in 1907–8 was 139,106, and in 1925–6, 360,503, with a great increase in the number of girl pupils. This total of 360,503 is, I may add, over six times the total of pupils in those other secondary schools not on the Grant list but recognised as efficient, which we usually call Public Schools. (*Statistics of Public Education.* 1925–1926, p. 38).

There is little doubt that a similar movement is in process of development in University education, and even as it is, instead of the two old Universities of 100 years ago, in 1927 we have those, and eight new Universities, together with some five University Colleges in England alone. There is also the University of Wales, with its three constituent colleges. Nor must we forget the large number of Training Colleges for teachers, and Training Departments.

Supplementary to all the educational organizations to which I have referred, there is a steady growth in adult education, i.e. of those at work and

past the possibility of regular instruction in school or college. This dates back to the Mechanics' Institute of 1823, but gathered force as time went on from the Co-operative Movement, the Working Men's Colleges, and, not least, from the admirable and wide-ranging efforts of the Workers' Educational Association and its method of University Tutorial Classes first organized by Albert Mansbridge in 1903.

I have ventured to speak somewhat fully about this educational development because to any thinking man it must suggest reflections of a far-reaching kind. I am well aware that the bulk of the population are not, in the true sense of the word, well educated. But the range of education has spread far more widely, its influence has gone far deeper, than our grandfathers could easily conceive. It is not only that it has produced a very large community of teachers, though this is a point of great importance in itself; or that the number of the various channels of higher education has risen beyond every reasonable anticipation of two generations ago. But it has popularised a number of new ideas. It has led to a sort of broadcasting of what we may call a cheap science, to a terminology, a way of thinking, or rather of resisting the old traditional thought, which has produced a different, and, I dare say to some minds, a less satisfactory atmosphere than that of fifty years ago. A new type of young person is being produced, not learned or specially intellectual, but approaching all intellectual problems, and, not least, religious problems,

in a new way, more interested perhaps, more critical certainly, and much more difficult to handle.

And the total effect of this surprising development of education in all its various branches, and in the various strata of the community, is to put more stress and strain on the ministry, to ask for a new approach and an approach that is in every sense of the word thoroughly alive. It is a great challenge, an immense stimulus to our teaching, our reading and our preaching. And it makes a great call, and gives a great chance, I do not say only to a good man, but to the best in every man.

IV

I have spoken of the immense increase in population, the great democratization of the forms of government, both at the centre and in the local community, and the extension of education, as three principal factors in the changed social situation with which the modern parson has to deal. And I hope that, as I have spoken, certain necessary implications for the work which we clergy have to do will have suggested themselves to your minds. But I should like to conclude this lecture by calling your attention to some other not unimportant points which seem to me to emerge.

(1) The ministry of the priest is a spiritual ministry. It is as necessary as ever and as welcome. God has set your feet in a large room. And an appreciation of its largeness is a desirable,

and perhaps an indispensable, qualification for a worthy ministry. Yet to a certain extent this very largeness gives you a greater liberty to do your spiritual work. Much of the legislation which has been adopted has resulted in the appointment of definite officials or authorities to do work or to administer services which in old days would have been left to the individual or to the voluntary societies, including the greatest of voluntary societies, the Church. And thus the Church, with a generous recognition of the noble work done under State auspices and every wish to help it forward, has more freedom for what may be described as its specially religious responsibilities. And may I say, too, that it is the special privilege of the Church and its clergy to keep a firm hold on the human personality, and especially to value that individual soul of which a State system may sometimes lose sight in the large scale activities on which it is perforce engaged. And the clergy have a special opportunity, through the age-long method of pastoral visitation.

(2) It is again the part of the clergy especially to keep the spiritual motive aflame, and to show that the personal service of the community is fortified and maintained best of all by the inspiration of the Christian Religion. It has been said by one of the greatest social students of our time, Charles Booth,* that "The whole conception of the duties of the clergy has changed and widened in the course of the last century. No body of men could possibly succeed in performing the strangely

**Life and Labour in London. Religious Influences. Summary.* p. 28.

varied functions now expected of them: to detect abuses and instruct in the principles of sanitation; to study political economy and advise in trade difficulties and disputes between master and men; to teach principles of thrift and household management, and to assist in finding employment for young people; to do duty as trustees or impresarios in providing art and amusement guaranteed to be pure and wholesome, and, in fact, to be always prepared with a panacea ready made to fit any emergency.

But the peculiar hardship of their situation is that not only are they unable to accomplish all that is looked for from them, but that the attempt to do so tends to unfit them for the work which has always been admitted to be proper to their calling. For the mazes of theology, for the effects of pulpit oratory, for the profounder consideration of the experiences of human nature and its spiritual needs, which can only be matured and digested amidst a certain amount of leisure, they often leave themselves no time at all."

You may be surprised, at first, that I should quote these words with apparent approval. But with me, when spoken by such an authority, they carry great weight both in what they say and in what they suggest. Mr. Charles Booth does not mean that what he calls the modern conception of the duties of the clergy prevailing in 1902, when his work was published, was the right one. He means rather, I believe, that the conception which the clergy ought to have is of another kind more proper to their calling, and

especially to "the profounder consideration and treatment of the experiences of human nature and its spiritual needs." It is our business, I think, to know and appreciate the public social services which are carried on in our midst, and, it may be, it is the business of some of us to give some time to a particular branch. And it certainly is our business to enlist the active sympathy and work of the laity in these various activities which Mr. Booth has depicted. The rise of the laity in the management of Church affairs and Church government has been a very remarkable feature of the last twenty years, and we do well to lead the laity, from the Christian standpoint, to engage in the social work of the community —work which does concern the Church as a whole, though demanding different contributions from the layman or laywoman, and the priest. The material conditions of life are not opposed to the spiritual: indeed their improvement is often very necessary to the development of the spiritual, and may itself be spiritual work. What we clergy have to do is to promote the rule of the Spirit and to make the spiritual values supreme. And more than this, it is our privilege to proclaim that those who wish to serve humanity most are in need of a spiritual inspiration. As Mrs Webb wrote in her Recollections of her early days, "We all make the service of man the leading doctrine of our time. But in order to serve humanity we need inspiration from a super-human force towards which we are perpetually striving."* And

**My Apprenticeship.* Beatrice Webb. 1926. p. 149.

it is the pointing to that super-human force by those who know the conditions of the day, and the material means which are available for their treatment, that seems to me in a special degree the office of the modern priest. To use Mr. Booth's words, the people desire at our hands a "profounder consideration of human nature and its spiritual needs." They want us to know the facts with which human nature has to struggle in the slums as well as in Berkeley Square. They want us to realise that as many as 30 per cent. of the inhabitants of the richest, as well as the largest, city in the world live actually at or beneath the level of bare subsistence, and they want us, with that knowledge, to try and minister in the fullest possible sense of the word to their spiritual needs. After all, as the greatest Christian teachers have always insisted, "the primary end and function of every Church deserving of the august name" is spiritual. It is our duty to do our best to understand the social background of our age: and also to minister in the best way we can to social improvements. And since man only really becomes a *person* through the action upon him of normal human society and normal human societies, and his reaction thereto, we ought to do all we can to secure the favourable social environment and the healthy action of society upon him. But let us never forget that the Church, zealous as she ought to be to make this life better, yet quite definitely looks beyond this life. The Church's "primary end and function" (to quote Baron von Hugel) "is the awakening souls to,

the preparing them for, the holding before them embodiments of, *the other life*, the life beyond the grave." "Very certainly," he says, "the Church has also to help in the amelioration of *this life*; but I submit, always after, and in subordination to, and penetrated by, that metaphysical, ontological, other-worldly sense and life which alone completes and satisfies fully awakened man." *

So also should the priest of to-day, the modern parson, conceive his work and the object and range of his care and labours. And the more completely and sincerely he does so conceive it, the more will he seek to understand the people of to-day, and the world in which they live—that he may seize to the full that opportunity which the conditions and the people of to-day give him.

We are a very active, very rapidly changing generation; we have tasted some of the fruits of power, some of the fruits of knowledge. But we are very poor, very ignorant still; very much in need. Our age is full of unrest. No one knows what the next years may bring forth in Europe or in the civilized world. There is much materialism, much secularism, and yet a hunger all the time for the things of the spirit. In spite of the great political and educational development, so many miss, so many lose the way. The world is an odd compound of materialism and a sort of instinctive religion, a sort of instinctive desire for higher and better things. It is

**Selected Letters.* Baron Fr. von Hugel. 1927. p. 220.

hungry for life. It is hungry for Him whom we, the unworthy vessels of His mercy, are commissioned to preach, the Unchanging and Eternal Saviour, Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER II

THE RELIGIOUS SITUATION

In the present lecture I am going to speak first of what I may call the external statistical facts regarding the religious situation in relation both to the numbers of people attending places of worship, and to the number and distribution of the clergy of the Church of England. Next I will try and set before you some of the more spiritual aspects of the conditions of things which my statistics will disclose. After that I will refer to certain encouraging factors in the general religious situation, and I will end with pointing out the challenge which this whole condition of affairs makes to the modern clergyman.

I

In a chapter entitled "The Genesis of the Town", contained in her book *At the Works*, Lady Bell describes the growth of the great industrial centre of Middlesbrough from a population of 35 in 1811 to a population of 104,787 in 1911. And between 1901 and 1910, at a moment when

the total population was nearly 97,000, she found that the number of people attending any place of worship was 22,192, divided as follows:

Men	7,234
Women	8,360
Children	6,598

That is, there were about 70,000 who attended no place of worship at all in a town which had sixty Churches, Mission Rooms, or Chapels of one sort or other.

A similar Church census was made by Mr. Seebohm Rowntree in York in 1901, where there was a population of 77,793, with fifty-one Churches, Chapels, and Mission Halls. Here, on the assumption that half the morning congregation attended Church again in the evening, the census revealed that 13,402 was the average attendance of adults at places of worship on each Sunday, i.e., about 28% of the adult population of York, taking 48,000 or so persons to be over sixteen. It is worth adding, especially in view of the London figures, that in this census an attempt was made to ascertain the working-class attendance so far as appearances made this possible, and that the figure showed that the proportion (not, of course, the actual numbers) of the population who attend public worship is very much the same in both the "working" and the "upper" classes. (*Poverty*, p. 407.)

Complete statistics of Church membership are

not, I think, given in Charles Booth's *Life and Labour in London*. But the impression left by the whole series of his volumes on *Religious Influences* comes to the same effect. "It may be said of the inhabitants of London," he writes, "as of the people of England, that they are distinctly Christian in the sense that they would all (except the Jews) repudiate the imputation of belonging to any other of the great religions of the world."* But when you look for something more persistent and definite the unpleasing truth is that the denser and the poorer the population the weaker the hold of all forms of organized religion. And taking a map which he has made colouring the different areas of London according to the means of their inhabitants, yellow standing for rich: red for middle class: pink for artisan: blue for less well-paid working class, black for slums, he says, "The palpable distinctions are those of means. Fashionable and 'yellow' districts secure, at the least, prosperous churches and large morning congregations on Sunday. For the rest, what was written of North London holds good throughout. Where the streets are 'red' we find a vigorous middle class religious development combined with active social life. Where 'pink' there is, as regards organized religion, a comparative blank. Where 'blue' we have the missions, and step by step as it deepens to 'black', the more hopeless becomes the task. The map thus seems to give the key. . . . From these broad conclusions there is no escape."†

**Religious Influences. Summary.* pp. 422-424. †*ib.* p. 424.

These statements are made of the towns. But in the country, though undoubtedly the percentage of Church attendance to population is higher than in the towns, the position is not particularly encouraging. I do not suggest that the anonymous volume on country life published in 1925, under the title *England's Green and Pleasant Land*, is particularly unprejudiced, or that the writer's experience is a fair sample of the Church in the countryside all over England. But what he says, with every allowance in the world for a special point of view, gives one some uncomfortable moments and rubs home some things at least which are true. There are twelve parishes in his district with twelve parsons, and he says, "Only two or three of these twelve parsons have their churches more than a tenth full at any service. Several frequently preach to less than a dozen people, and sometimes to less than half-a-dozen."

To give one further quotation from a work of a more scientific character, I would call your attention to the very valuable Report on *The Army and Religion*,* drawn up 1917–1919 by an Interdenominational Committee of which Bishop Talbot was chairman, and Professor David Cairns was secretary. The Report is valuable because it represents the result of an enormous amount of inquiry and evidence from "the manhood of England under Arms" in the Great War. After quoting certain individual witnesses the Report sums up as follows:

* Macmillan. 1919.

"We do not base our view of the whole situation upon these necessarily imperfect inductions, but on the general cumulative effect of the whole mass of evidence which certainly bears out the impression that these estimates convey, that three-fourths or four-fifths of the men from England are outside living relationship with the Churches, and that while the situation in Scotland is somewhat better, it is very grave, and that, especially in the great industrial cities, it approximates to the English standard in cities of the same type. The general resemblance, indeed, is greater than one would expect, as may be seen by a reference to the evidence in detail."*

Now, I am sorry to paint such a black picture of the religious situation. But it is necessary to know the facts, and necessary to face them.

II

Let us now consider, again from the statistical point of view, the second question which I set myself, relating to the supply of clergy. I do not myself agree with the policy which seeks to increase the ranks of the clergy of the Church of England immediately at all costs. And I notice with pleasure, amongst other things, that the Report of the Archbishop's Committee on *The Supply of Candidates for Holy Orders*† states that "the supply

op. cit. p. 190. † 1925. S.P.C.K. p. 11.

will not become really abundant until Churchmen give to religion a far larger place in family life and show far greater care than many of them do now for the education of their children in religious principles." But it is at least interesting to notice what the actual resources of the Church are in the number of its ministers compared with its resources many years ago.

In the reign of Queen Elizabeth, when the total population was about 5,000,000, the total number of clergy was 9,400,* and the total number of benefices about 8,000. In the reign of King George V, when the total population of England and Wales was 37,885,242, the total number of clergy, beneficed or unbeneficed, according to the census, is 21,989, while the total number of benefices is 14,426.

A consideration of the census for 1921 is very instructive. It was taken in June when, no doubt, several clergy from overseas were on holiday in England, and probably not a few home clergy were on holiday abroad. But its figures will give a very good idea of the situation. In England and Wales the total number of Anglican clergy was 21,989; of Roman Catholic priests and monks 3,117; and of ministers of other denominations 10,117. This is, of course, a very great difference, in proportion to the number of clergy to population from Queen Elizabeth's time. Then there was one clergyman to 532 people; now there is one clergyman to 1,723 people.

I go to the census again for another point.

*See *The Elizabethan Clergy*. Henry Gee. 1898. p. 217.

The rural population of England and Wales in 1921 was 7,850,857 (20.7 per cent. of the whole). The number of Anglican clergy then working in rural parishes was 10,389, just under 50 per cent. of the whole of the English clergy. The urban population of England and Wales at that time was 30,134,385, and 11,600 Anglican clergy were living, and most of them working, amongst these. This again is a significant fact with regard to the distribution of the clergy of which we might well take notice with a view to action. The proportion amongst Roman Catholics and the Free Churches is very different, and, of course, it must be admitted that the conditions are also very different.

I have given these figures with regard to the clergy because I believe that they are interesting. But while I think that the facts call for a considerable redistribution of the clergy, and a much greater use of the lay ministry in the country, as well as in the towns, the comparatively small number of the clergy is not a cause of the unsatisfactory religious situation so much as a symptom or an incident in it. And the same may be said in the decline of the number of men ordained, when the Archbishop's committee reported, as seen in the fact that the number of those ordained Deacon in the year 1924 was 97 less than the lowest point reached in the ten years before the war.*

**The Supply of Candidates for Holy Orders*, p. 7.

III

What then can we say are the causes, or what we may call the spiritual elements, in the present situation? The present Bishop of Gloucester, in a valuable note which he has appended to the Report of the Archbishop's Committee on The Supply of Candidates for Holy Orders, asks the question "why a large number of persons who have a certain amount of private means, and, therefore, are to a certain extent independent of the financial position, used to take Orders and do not do so now?"* And he replies that the reason is this:

"The secularisation of our modern life generally and of our educational system in particular. This secularisation comes from various causes. It arises partly from the intellectual atmosphere, an atmosphere which is not one of disbelief but of uncertainty —uncertainty about the truth of Christianity in any definite form, about the reality of the spiritual side of man's life, about the reality of a future life. It is just this atmosphere of uncertainty which prevents people from being willing to take up a life which definitely commits them. It has a further effect; it makes them concentrate their attention on the world and worldly things." Now secularisation is a large word, but I think it is rather a useful word in relation to our immediate problem. And it manifests itself in various forms, some apparently idealistic, others most crude and materialistic.

The Supply of Candidates for Holy Orders, p. 28.

The material improvement of the present conditions of society is not a bad object for any man to pursue. But it is not the best—it may, indeed, in the hands of some be attended with grave dangers. The works of Dostoevsky are full of warnings, indeed, as to the starvation, and, in the long run, the ruin of life to which it may lead. And at its highest, as what is called humanitarianism pure and simple, it requires a supernatural motive to keep it alive for any length of time.

I do not think that I am unfair in suggesting that even a humanitarianism which lacks the supernatural motive, and still more plainly a humanitarianism which concentrates on the natural needs, has some shadow at least of a secular idea of life behind it.

It is much clearer that those lives which are of a purely selfish character, and devoted to the pursuit of material wealth, the lust for success for oneself, are involved in secular ambitions. Wealth has such power, and appears to give the means of such pleasure, that it has a sort of fascination for some of the most energetic and able men. It is curious to find, for example, that in the extensive inquiry among young men and boys of many nations conducted in connection with the vast Youth Conference at Helsingfors in 1926, "in the list of the three greatest men in the world at the present time frequent reference to Henry Ford, who is looked upon as the premier exhibit of efficiency and of wealth that efficiency can create."*

**Youth and the Christian Way of Life in a Changing World.* Y.M.C.A. 1926. p. 9.

It is curious to find that the prevailing answers to the question put to older boys in the same inquiry, "What would you or some intimate friend like to accomplish within the next ten years?" seem to be these:

"To acquire an economic independence."
"To get a position and found a home."
"To obtain recognised success in commerce."
"To obtain a good position in society."
"To be a successful business man."
"To attain money."
"To get an economically safe position."
"To secure money for a comfortable home."*

I think you will agree that if the unselfish humanitarianism of which I spoke above has a shadow of the secular, these self-regarding desires show a great deal of its substance.

But I have still to speak of the secularisation of our common life in its crudest form. This may be roughly summed up as the desire for pleasure. "This pleasure," says Don Julio Monzo, of South America, "may wear various aspects, purely sensual—such as licentiousness, greed and effeminacy offer—or psychological, as the gratification of vanity. Up to the present time I have not met millionaires in South America who have regarded money at their disposal as a sacred trust, investing them with weighty responsibilities towards the community, through whom they have become rich. I have only known a few politicians who—once in power—have considered themselves

**Youth in a Changing World.* Y.M.C.A. 1926. p. 10.

the servants and not the masters of the people; who have clearly understood that power involves heavy burdens, more to be feared than desired."*

In our own country the amount of time and money consumed in the pursuit of pleasure is very great, and has grown by leaps and bounds, in all classes, during the last thirty years. Holiday-making was quoted by Charles Booth in the Final Volume of *Life and Labour in London*, as one of the most remarkable changes of the nineties; and even when he wrote, in 1902, the number of excursions in brakes, long before the days of the motor chars-a-banc, were "without end" (p. 50). "The spirit of pleasure," he writes, "in London, and the same is true of other places, does not appear to need fostering so much as wise guidance." "The demand for amusement is another form of the same craving; with some it takes one shape, with some another; and if cinemas and dancing halls are thronged by the masses, the pace is set by the enormous expenditure of some of the very rich on clothes, motors, jewellery." "The maw of pleasure is not easy to fill. The appetite grows." *Religious Influences. Summary* (p. 426). And the very fact that much of the amusement on which money and time are squandered is such as requires the minimum of responsive effort on the part of the amused, like Sunday newspapers, and picture palaces, increases the impoverishment of mind and soul which goes with so much of this secularisation. Nor must we forget the destructive effects on the imagination, and therefore on the religious side of man's nature,

**Youth in a Changing World.* Y.M.C.A, 1926. p. 9.

of the various forms of excitement, such as betting, in which men and women indulge, or through the trampling underfoot of beauty in an age of machines. "The Nineteenth Century," it has been said, "did not attack beauty. It simply trampled it under foot, with the result that our modern democracy is born atrophied, and has painfully to recover that love of significant form which has been one of the marks of civilized man from the Bronze Age until the Industrial Revolution temporarily destroyed it."

And by way of summing up I should like to quote some words of Thomas Hardy written in 1922, in relation to poetry, art and religion (all closely connected with the mind): "Whether owing to the barbarising of taste in the younger minds by the dark madness of the late war, the unabashed cultivation of selfishness in all classes, the plethoric growth of knowledge simultaneously with the starving of wisdom, 'a degrading thirst after outrageous stimulation' (to quote Wordsworth again) or from any other cause, we seem threatened with a new Dark Age." (*Late Lyrics and Earlier.* p. xiv.)

IV

I have spoken enough of the secularisation of modern life as an incident in, or synonym for, the indifference or imperviousness to religion which is so common, so taken for granted and, dare I say, so little faced. May I, before I speak of the challenge which this situation addresses to the modern parson, quote an interesting piece of evi-

dence as to the actual attitude to organised religion which is so often expressed ?

In the inquiry to which I have referred, made of youth in many countries for the Conference in August 1926 at Helsingfors, there is a section which deals with Youth's attitude towards organised religion. "We find here," the Report says, "in most cases benevolent neutrality. . . . But one fact pregnant with serious consequences remains certain. The younger generation is deserting the Church." And the Report for England, Ireland, and Wales, prepares a list of the principal indictments against religion, some of them rather crudely expressed.

"There are too many denominations and too much antagonism. A united Church is needed."

"The attitude of the Churches towards war and social evils, on which they take a very weak line, keep away the masses of the people."

"Churches are suffering from centuries of accumulated tradition—they must get back to the real Jesus."

"The Churches fail to attract the men outside their ranks—men will not come in on the terms laid down by the Churches, which are not open to opinion outside their creeds. The beauty of faith has degenerated into a tiresome and stale formula. They do not grasp the truth that 'where the Spirit of God is, there is liberty'."

"Organised religion needs to be thoroughly overhauled. It does not appeal to the younger generation—services are too dull, prayers too stereotyped and monotonously spoken, hymns are

not suitable, and sermons are below the intellectual standard needed to-day."

"Organised religion is a force of great potentiality handicapped by lack of adventurous leadership, and hindered by a heritage of dogmatic traditionalism which hesitates to express itself in terms of modern life; but it is struggling towards a realised effectiveness."

"Its complacency, bigotry, and wranglings fill us with disgust; it contributes nothing towards the world's welfare."

"The Churches are the chief harbingers of snobbery." (*op. cit.* pp. 93, 95).

V

All this that I have said is very painful speaking, very painful reading; and you will, many of you, hasten to tell me it is false or one-sided. You are right, it is only one side. It is not the whole truth, and by itself it is untrue. And I have not said it in order to discourage any single one of my hearers, but because I feel that the more deliberately we face the unpleasant facts, for these are facts and not fancies or exaggerations, the more effectively shall we do the work God calls us to do, the better and more thoroughly shall we commend the Gospel, by our teaching and the manner of our lives, as the ministers of Christ.

And there is another side. There are, may we not claim, many signs of a longing for spiritual things. In what I have said I have necessarily

been speaking in terms of Church membership and of the institutional side of religion. But we must not measure the depth of religious feeling or religious interest solely in this way. And it is well to recall the opinion expressed by the Dean of St. Paul's in his Hulsean Lectures, delivered to this University the other day. "The history of a Church," he says, "ought to be a biography of ideals", while our ordinary Church historians are, as a rule, concerned with party struggles, or attempts to suppress a particular ecclesiastical movement, "or with appointments to bishoprics and debates in Convocation and Lambeth Conferences."* So an account of the religious situation in the present day must take in the movement of religious sentiment among the people at large, and perhaps attach as much importance to this aspect as to the aspect of Church attendance. And here there is certainly a great deal to encourage. The institutional element may, in certain quarters, fail to make a large appeal, but the inspirational element exercises a powerful attraction.

The first and greatest witness to this attraction of religion is the universal reverence paid to the life and teaching of Christ.

> That one face, far from vanish, rather grows
> Or decomposes but to recompose,
> Become my universe that feels and knows.

He exercises a sway over our age which is at least equal to that exerted by Him in any age of the

**The Platonic Tradition in English Religious Thought.* W. R. Inge. 1926. pp. 2, 4.

past. And it is a very striking witness to that attraction that so many "Lives of Christ," frequently unconventional in character, have been written and have been in great demand. I will only mention Papini's *Story of Christ*, Glover's *Jesus of History*, the American Bruce Barton's *The Man Nobody Knows*, Middleton Murry's *Life of Jesus*, and Joseph Wittig's *Life of Jesus in Palestine, Silesia and Elsewhere*.

The interest in religion appears again in the great vogue of books on religious mysticism, a field which has continually enlarged its boundaries during the present century. It is further expressed in the wide interest in religious psychology, a subject which is both fascinating and, to the untrained mind, not without danger. You can see the appeal of the religious idea again in a different field in the markedly spiritual or idealistic trend of modern philosophy, and though it is not at all the same thing, in more modern science. The Gifford Lectures of recent years have been deeply interesting, not least on account of the strain many of the lecturers have felt in keeping on the far side of the Christian Revelation, because of the terms of the Gifford Trust. And I think we might fairly claim that the spiritual attitude of a natural scientist like Professor J. Arthur Thomson, and the Christian temper of Professors Pringle-Pattison, Sorley, Taylor, and Webb, to speak of philosophers, was full of happy auguries for the influence of the Christian religion and the Christian approach to life among thoughtful circles of our own contemporaries.

You can see it again in the great interest shown in the Religions of the East, and in some of the movements which to us may sometimes seem fantastic, associated with the names of Christian Science, or Theosophy, or Spiritualism. They may be fantastic; they contain much that is false; they certainly miss the supreme truth of the Incarnation of the Son of God; but they make a not unreligious appeal in times like our own, especially to those who may have been indifferent to the spiritual claim of religion and religious motives, or absorbed in material interests. To quote the Lambeth Conference of 1920, "We recognize that modern movements of thought connected with Spiritualism, Christian Science, and Theosophy join with the Christian Church in protesting against a materialistic view of the universe, and at some points emphasize partially neglected aspects of truth." (*Report*, p. 41).

May I not also refer to the interest which many of the best modern novels and plays take in the world of the spirit? Whatever we may think of H. G. Wells, he cannot be said to be uninterested, even if he is unhelpful, in the religious problem. And a greater man than he, Bernard Shaw, has given a remarkable expression to that interest in *St. Joan*, as well as in other prefaces and plays. And possibly one of the most striking expressions of this interest is given by John Galsworthy in a passage in *The Forsyte Saga*, in the chapter describing the burial of the dog Balthazar:

'"Strange life a dog's," said Jolyon suddenly;

" the only four-footer with rudiments of altruism, and a sense of God! "

Jolly looked at his father.

" Do you believe in God, Dad? I've never known."

At so searching a question from one to whom it was impossible to make a light reply, Jolyon stood for a moment, feeling his back tried by the digging.

" What do you mean by God? " he said. " There are two irreconcilable ideas of God. There's the Unknowable Creative Principle—one believes in that. And there's the Sum of Altruism in Man—naturally one believes in that."

" I see. That leaves out Christ, doesn't it? "

Jolyon stared. Christ, the link between those two ideas! Out of the mouth of babes! Here was orthodoxy scientifically explained at last! The sublime poem of the Christ life was man's attempt to join those two irreconcilable conceptions of God. And since the Sum of human altruism was as much a part of the Unknowable Creative Principle as anything else in Nature and the Universe, a worse link might have been chosen after all! Funny—how one went through life without seeing it in that sort of way!

" What do *you* think, old man? " he said.

Jolly frowned. " Of course, my first year we talked a good bit about that sort of thing. But in the second year one gives it up; I don't know why—it's awfully interesting."

Jolyon remembered that he also had talked a

good deal about it his first year at Cambridge, and given it up in his second.

"I suppose," said Jolly, "it's the second God, you mean, that old Balthazar had a sense of."

"Yes, or he would never have burst his poor old heart because of something outside himself."

"But wasn't that just selfish emotion, really?"

Jolyon shook his head. "No, dogs are not pure Forsytes, they love something outside themselves."' (*In Chancery*. Part II, Ch. x).

And besides these, there are many other dramatists and writers less well-known who have a passion for reality which brings them not far off the Kingdom of Heaven. I must refer particularly to Clutton Brock, and the Saturday Articles on religion in *The Times* which have now appeared regularly for over ten years. And, whatever we may think of the actual answers or of any "conclusions" which may be drawn from them, the inquiry into the religious beliefs of their readers by means of a *questionnaire* undertaken by *The Nation* and *The Daily News* in the summer of 1926 afford valuable evidence of the undisguised interest in these questions (see *The State of Religious Belief*, R. B. Braithwaite, 1927). Nor must I forget the series of contributions in Sunday newspapers, and in other journals, on religious questions, particularly the series of essays by leading novelists and others in *The Daily Express* and published as *My Religion* (Hutchinson & Co.) In a not altogether dissimilar field, and with a public far larger in the aggregate than any of the publics touched by the writers already named, I would call attention to

the attractiveness of the religious programme of the British Broadcasting Company. I have no hesitation in saying on the highest authority that the religious services provided on the wireless are the most universally popular of all the sections of their programmes; and I may add this, on the same authority, that while there was no need or obligation of any kind to give any religious item in the broadcasting programme, the decision to give religious services in the liberal way now in force has been practically universally welcomed as the meeting of a very definite and real desire.

VI

There are many adversaries, many obstacles, which the ministers of religion have to face, many distractions from, and hindrances to, true faith. But there is much to encourage, much to call for the very best effort from those who hold the commission of Christ and His Church. The world's need is very great. We cannot meet it except by faith and eager and persistent work. But we are given an opportunity which few ages have ever enjoyed, an opportunity which calls for the exercise of all the powers we possess.

And may I once again quote Thomas Hardy as, in a very unexpected way, expressing his hopes as to the use which we in the Church of England may make of our opportunity. He has been speaking of the bad signs of the present day—and of the necessity that religion, like poetry, should

keep moving—and of his fear that men's minds appear to be moving back rather than on. Then he proceeds:

" In any event poetry, pure literature in general, religion—I include religion because poetry and religion touch each other, or rather modulate into each other; are, indeed, often but different names for the same thing—these, I say, the visible signs of mental and emotional life, must like all other things keep moving, becoming; even though at present, when belief in witches of Endor is displacing the Darwinian theory and 'the truth that shall make you free,' men's minds appear, as above noted, to be moving backwards rather than on. I speak, of course, somewhat sweepingly, and should except many isolated minds; also the minds of men in certain worthy but small bodies of various denominations, and perhaps in the homely quarter where advance might have been the very least expected a few years back—the English Church—if one reads it rightly as showing evidence of 'removing those things that are shaken,' in accordance with the wise Epistolary recommendation to the Hebrews. For since the historic and once august hierarchy of Rome some generations ago lost its chance of being the religion of the future by doing otherwise, and throwing over the little band of neo-Catholics who were making a struggle for continuity by applying the principles of evolution to their own faith, joining hands with modern science, and outflanking the hesitating English instinct towards liturgical reform

(a flank march which I at the time quite expected to witness, with the gathering of many millions of waiting agnostics into its fold); since then, one may ask, what other purely English establishment than the Church, of sufficient dignity and footing, and with such strength of old association, such architectural spell, is left in this country to keep the shreds of morality together? "*

**Late Lyrics and Earlier.* Thomas Hardy, 1922. p. xv.

CHAPTER III

THE DUTY OF CO-OPERATION

THERE are many aspects of the modern world in which a parson is set to work of which it would be possible to speak. But we must be content for the moment with the two with which I have already dealt—the social aspect, and the religious aspect. It will be sufficient to remind you that in nearly all its aspects the modern world is different from the world which our grandfathers knew, different indeed, from many points of view, from the world as it was before the war. And it is enough to insist that in all sorts of ways the world, England, our villages, our towns, not only have changed, but are constantly changing, and that these changes will continue.

In these next two lectures I want to talk not of the modern situation, but of the parson whom it confronts. And I want to speak especially of the kind of parson with whom we are most familiar, the parson in the parish, the parish priest.

I

I have remarked already that our feet are set in a large room. May I start off by saying of

the work of a parish priest, that there is no life happier, or more rich in opportunity, if we tackle that work in the manner which befits a large room, in a *large-minded* way. Its opportunities grow with advancing experience—but there are many straight to our hands from the first moment of commencing our curacy. And perhaps some of the apparent opportunities, at our earliest start, are such that if we are not careful they go to our heads. As a friend of mine, a prominent lawyer and a prominent Churchman, said to me the other day, "There is no one who, on starting his professional or commercial career, at once steps into a position of leadership and responsibilities comparable with that accorded to the youngest curate the day after his ordination. He immediately becomes a teacher, a pastor, an authority, on a pedestal of his own, to whom some immediate circle defers." Personally, I think that this is a great pity—but there it is. The wise and modest curate will be rather abashed than uplifted by it; and I beg you, as you value your souls and your future work, preserve your balance and your modesty in spite of the authority with which you are so suddenly hedged. But I say this by the way. The point which I am anxious to make is that the office of parson in itself puts a man in possession of opportunities of helping others to which no other office, held as a matter of course by a young man at the start of his work, can lay claim. And I would add, by way of corollary, that for a man who longs to know his fellow human beings in all their experiences and

at all stages of their life, and to serve them with the best of his powers, there is no calling so full of promise and opportunity as the calling of a parson.

How shall I describe the work of a parson, and especially of a parish priest? I rather think that it might be happily described as "the work of opening doors." Canon Barnett, one of the greatest parsons in recent English Church history, described himself as giving his life to opening doors, "the doors between the classes, the doors between the Universities and the democracy, the doors between culture and industry, the doors between nations, the door to the fuller and wider life which consists in the end in the knowledge of God." And I think any priest might count himself happy, and thank God, if his work could be similarly described as a work of opening the doors of Knowledge, and of Life.

Perhaps I may quote another sentence or two from Canon Barnett, whose "Life," by his wife, I strongly recommend you to read both for its religious insight and its sense of social service. For these sentences put better for my purpose than any I have seen the true meaning of the knowledge, and the more abundant life, which we, as the Ministers of Christ, are commissioned to spread, in their relation to the activities of the parish. Thus in 1874, in his first parish report, Barnett wrote: "The end we have in view is that everyone may know God as a Father. . . . Every new scheme we propose, every plan we

carry out, does its work if it throws one gleam of light on this truth."*

And again, in 1877, he said:

"If one sentence could explain the principle of our work, it is that we aim at decreasing, not suffering but sin. Too often has the East End been described as if its inhabitants were pressed down by poverty, and every spiritual effort for its reformation has been supported by means which aim only at reducing suffering. In my eyes the pain which belongs to the winter cold is not so terrible as the drunkenness with which the summer heat seems to fill our streets, and the want of clothes does not so loudly call for remedy as the want of interest and culture. It is sin, therefore, in its widest sense, against which we are here to fight. Sin in the sense of missing the best.

"Sin must be recognised as manifold, and anything which mars the grandeur of human life must be brought under a converting influence. Such influences are the culture which opens to men's minds the enjoyment of art and literature; the knowledge which makes the whole world alive and binds together the human family by ties of common interest; the religion which raises men to 'the Immanuel's land,' whence they see the lives of those who on earth have done the will of their Father in heaven. That all such power may be brought to bear

*Canon Barnett. His Life, Work and Friends. 1918. Vol. I, p. 75.

on our people, the *organisation of the parish* has been started."*

Let me emphasise those last words, for if you will interpret them in the fullest way you will see how large a scope is given to "the organisation of the parish." The present Archbishop of Canterbury, in his Primary Charge on *The Character and Call of the Church of England*, has described the kernel of the parochial system in the following words. It is "the idea of a 'persona' or 'parson' appointed for each parish in the land, as the resident and representative man who is bound to have his home there, whoever else is absent, and to be at the call of every parishioner who wishes, in health or sickness, by day or night, to avail himself of his services."† "We have," he continues, "a traditional and recognised rule, supported by both Church and State—a rule which requires the continuous residence and the personal service of a duly appointed and qualified officer who has a recognised status and a defined authority in matters ecclesiastical within an accurately prescribed area, surrounded on every side by other areas prescribed with equal accuracy, each of them served by a religious officer with status and responsibilities corresponding to his own." The Archbishop speaks of "the religious officer," but of course with the officer goes the organisation of which he is, so to speak, the chief.

**Ibid.* p. 75.

†*The Character and Call of the Church of England.* Archbishop Davidson. 1912. p. 92.

And I think you will get the whole meaning of what I have sought to show as involved in Canon Barnett's phrase, "the organisation of the parish," if you add to the Archbishop's words some suggestive remarks which were addressed some seven or eight years ago by Dr. Burge, when Bishop of Southwark, to the Clergy of South London.

"The Church is established in every parish of the land, and our land is all parishes; whether we like it or not, however difficult or unpromising the work and the prospect may be, she must be there. That is to say, we offer a system which may provide in every parish throughout the country an incumbent and his staff of Church-workers. There they are all ready, not simply to 'proselytise,' but to help to promote the well-being of the parish, and this well-being, so the principles of our religion declare, implies the welfare of the whole man—body, mind and spirit."

Yes, you see, the parson, and not least the modern parson and his fellow workers, are charged with the welfare of the whole man—body, mind and spirit. I think that it is really often the failure to recognise the largeness of the parson's duties, as well as his opportunities, that accounts for the turning away of many highly gifted, able, and serious-minded men to other professions or posts which seem to be more definitely committed to the improvement of human conditions. Dr. Burge, whose words I have just quoted, was Headmaster of Winchester before he became a Diocesan Bishop. He knew intimately many men,

old pupils of his, who had gone into Government offices, or the public service, or accepted positions of influence in the industrial world because they felt that they could really serve their fellows better in these positions than in any other open to them. But he often said that great as these opportunities of service were, the opportunities which a large parish provided to a first-rate man, as its vicar, were immeasurably greater: and indeed he used to lament the difficulties of finding men with the initiative and leadership and intellectual as well as spiritual force who could be relied upon to rise to the height of the opportunity which a large parish offered.

Bishop Burge, a peculiarly shrewd and experienced observer, takes the instance of a large parish and exceptionally gifted men. But he, better than most, both knew and recognised that, wherever your parish might be, the right man, by which I mean the man of grit and character who will put his back into what needs doing, will find endless opportunities of service—if he looks at his work in a large way—service of the whole personality, body, mind and spirit. Even the most dead and most depressing parish kindles a little when tackled in the right way.

II

But, you will probably ask, conscious, maybe, of a number of depressing parishes, and even of depressing parsons, what is the right way to

tackle these parishes which provide such rich opportunities and such abundance of variety and interest? Well, I will try and devote the rest of my lecture not to telling you how it is done, or saving you the trouble of thinking things out for yourselves, but to suggesting a point of view from which the parish and its work may be approached by those who want to serve others, and who want to find, and to give, life.

I have tried already to set the stage, and paint the scene, in which the modern parson has to work. And I hope I succeeded in suggesting that the scene is by no means simple. Perhaps it never was simple. Certainly it is infinitely more complex now than it was 100 years ago. And I hope I also left the impression that the general development of society has led to a sort of reconsideration of the parson's place in the common scene. Of course he has his special function to perform—perhaps more bravely than before; but he no longer holds his old, so to speak, exclusive position. Others have come in, and, as a matter of fact, do some of the things which he used to do; with the result that he is, or ought to be, in certain affairs a co-operator with those others.

This leads me to the point I wish to make. The spirit in which the modern parson ought to work in the modern parish is the spirit of co-operation. That is the key word, or the key thought which I want you to remember. And I am going to apply this key thought in a variety of ways—so as to try, by means of illustrations in different fields, to give you a standard at which

to aim. But I am not going to forget the special function of spiritual witness which a clergyman is peculiarly expected to discharge, and later on I shall say something to show how central that is to everything he does.

When you commence deacon you are licensed to your vicar or rector. Loyalty to him is essential. If you cannot work with your vicar, the probability is that you had better go—and if you're in doubt let the Bishop advise you.

But, assuming such loyalty, I would urge that you must from the very earliest moment co-operate with the parish. What do I mean? Well, here you are, a young deacon shall we say, planted in the midst of a community of human beings. Whether the community be large or small, in country or town, there are certain activities in which it is engaged, certain public services by which it benefits. Get to know your town, your village—as a community, with body, mind and spirit. What do the people who live in it do? Is there a regular industry? Is there much unemployment? What do they read—Sunday newspapers or anything besides? What are their amusements? And where do they go to enjoy them? To what schools do they send their children? What is the death rate, and how does it compare with the average rate for the country?* Almost certainly in your search for answers to these questions you will have to range a little

*In 1926 the annual birth-rate for England and Wales per 1,000 was 17·8; the annual death-rate was 11.6, (for rural areas 11.00, and for large industrial towns up to 12·00 or more).

beyond the parish boundaries, for the parish is probably nowadays only part of a local Government area, Rural District Council, Urban District Council, Borough or County. And I think that it is a very good thing that you should at once get the sense of the larger community, within which your particular parish is placed. Find out who is the Medical Officer of Health, the school doctor, where the Employment Exchange officer lives, who are the teachers in the schools which affect your parish, who is the sanitary inspector? And don't forget what I said before about the most characteristic and influential personages of the England of the twentieth century whom Mr. Webb described as the elected councillor, the elementary schoolmaster, the school doctor, and the borough engineer. (See p. 8). Please don't imagine for a moment that I wish you to do their work; it would be a fatal thing to try. But as these men are to a great extent the shapers of the modern community it is most important that you should realise their existence, and get the feeling, and give the feeling, that you and they are co-operators, on certain lines at least, in a common cause. And let me say this, as a practical example of co-operation. If the local authority, or the community in some large way is dealing with a particular problem—don't run a little show of your own for the same purpose. You'll do it badly, very likely; you'll certainly waste money; and you'll weaken the main organ of action. Throw in your lot every time, if you possibly can, with the big civic scheme—and give it your strength. I do not

say that there are not occasions in which supplementary effort is not desirable—but see that it is supplementary, and not competitive.

I said at the beginning of my lecture that the office of the parson was to "open doors," not least the doors of personal understanding, of knowledge and life. And I am trying to impress upon you throughout my lecture that it is the welfare of the whole man, body, mind, and spirit, with which the parson is concerned. It is on this account that I emphasise co-operation with the *whole* parish, that is to say an understanding of the conditions in which all who live in the parish spend their lives, and a readiness to work with all those who are working for the elevation and improvement of the people, and to take advantage of the public services. Let me commend to you in this connexion a very valuable compendium of information as to the public services which are in existence to-day, health, insurance, poor law, pension, employment, education, etc., entitled *Public Social Services, A Handbook of Information*, published by the National Council of Social Service, London.* Do let us see, so far as work in towns is concerned, whether we cannot learn from and make use of the facilities which the community is obliged or permitted by law to supply, and put our strength into them—before starting little parochial organisations of our own for the same purpose.

And let us also see whether our parochial

*See also *The Local Government of the United Kingdom.* J. J. Clarke. 1927. (Pitman).

premises cannot be used (as they would often be welcomed) for the general purposes of the community, centres of teaching, adult education, places of recreation, reading rooms, meeting places for friendly societies, trades unions, conferences. Let us see whether our parochial machinery and *personnel* cannot be enlisted in co-operation with the salaried or voluntary agents of the many public services to do with education, employment, infant welfare, health and the rest. District visitors are very valuable allies in the regular round of parish work. Their value might in some cases even be increased by co-operation such as those suggested above. A parish nurse again is valuable—given full nursing training, with the official certificate, she might be used also as the recognised Health Visitor. And other instances could be suggested.

There is certainly no doubt that the help of such a great "voluntary" agency as the Church of England is, when given, greatly appreciated. To give two instances. The Report of the Local Government Board on Maternity and Child Welfare 1917 contains the following recommendation:

"The co-operation between a local authority which is carrying out a scheme and the voluntary agencies working in its district must be as close as possible if the full value of the voluntary effort is to be obtained."

And again, the Chief Medical Officer of the Board of Education in 1915 wrote:

"Notwithstanding the many and diverse claims evoked by the war, there is abundant evidence in the Reports of the School Medical Officers that excellent work has again been accomplished by voluntary agencies in matters concerning the well-being of children in attendance at Public Elementary Schools. . . . I am satisfied as to the extreme value of this co-operation between the voluntary and paid worker in the sphere of child welfare, and the services of such voluntary agencies is most warmly appreciated."

It is the parson's duty not only to be a co-operator himself, but to see that the Church, including the whole body of members, adopts the co-operative spirit.

III

I gave expression, a moment ago, to what may have appeared to some a limitation on the principles I have been seeking to commend; when I used the words "so far as work in towns is concerned." The limitation, however, is more apparent than real; for the text refers to public services and social facilities which are more conspicuous in towns than they are in the countryside, and not to the need or the spirit of co-operation as such. I should err gravely if I suggested that co-operation was less necessary in the villages than in the towns. On the contrary, the co-operation of the parson with the parish and all that it involves is even more necessary in the country.

In a sense the necessity is greater in the country because of the individualism of country people. There is so little community life, so little cohesion; and it is the want of organisation in rural life generally as well as in agriculture as an industry that is responsible for the lack of vitality and the undeveloped and even stagnant condition which shrewd observers lament in modern conditions of the present day. I have already referred to the articles appearing in the *Nation* reprinted in 1925 as *England's Green and Pleasant Land* (Cape). I recommend it, and I also recommend *Folk of the Furrow* by Christopher Holdenby (Smith, Elder), and I strongly recommend the Report (1920) of the Committee which the Archbishop of Canterbury appointed under the Chairmanship of Lord Bledisloe, *The Church and Rural Life* (S.P.C.K.) The first two of the books give an acute and vivid description of rural conditions: and the third deals specially with the contribution which the Church might make. All three have a good deal to say about the parson—and the two former books, in particular, say things which may be a little hard, but are none the less good for us to hear. I have little sympathy with those who talk in a noisy way about the failure of the Church. But I have even less sympathy with those who, when hard knocks are given to the Church, immediately rise up in self-justification and make the sky resound with indignant assertions which imply that the Church is above suspicion and beyond criticism, and that the clergy are incapable of imperfection. We must be very far gone in

blindness and, shall I say, petrifaction, if we think we have nothing whatever to learn. One reason the lay books have so much to say of the parson is that so much is possible on the parson's part. If he fails to lead, from lack of energy, or courage, or interest, or inability to break from that habit which has invalidated effort among so many well-intentioned people—viz., the taking for granted as right, or at least as tolerable, conditions (however wrong) which have existed from time immemorial, if the parson fails to lead there is too often no other leader.*

The country parish is not a community as things are, but it has the makings of a community; and the parson has a great chance in furtherance of such making. "The rural worker (it has been said) requires freedom to express his personality, and also freedom to choose voluntarily such forms of co-operative effort and corporate organisation as will conduce to the full social, political and industrial development, contentment and prosperity of the local population, and make them consciously proud of their community and of their existence and status in the body politic. For this the size and population of the country village are admirably fitted. An ideal Christian village should be something like a large harmonious family. The advantage which our larger villages possess is that they are large enough to provide the requisite leaders and the human material for organised life, but not so large as to make it

*Village Community Councils, and Rural Community Councils are valuable bodies for social service. See *Corporate Life in the Village* (National Council of Social Service. 1927).

impossible that all the people should know one another." By all means it behoves him to co-operate with it, on all its sides, with farmers, labourers, shopkeepers, publicans, squire and all. You ask how? Well, if he gets the idea of co-operation into his head, it is wonderful what a difference it makes, and what opportunities it opens out. And if you wish for practical suggestions let him get to understand and know his parishioners, for a start; let him read country geographies; let him learn something of the history of agriculture and rural life, and rural housing, and even rural economics. We don't want the clergy to be expert sociologists, or to make these things the themes of their sermons; but that is no reason for committing the opposite error of ignorance of the elementary facts in the background of their parishioners' life, and of the interests of their parishioners.

Consult the labourer, as well as the landlord and the farmer; take an interest in his trade union. If you are honest and open with farmer and labourer alike there is no reason why an interest in the workers' Trade Union should involve unfriendly relations with the farmer and the squire.

Again, is not the leisure of your parishioner a very important element in his life? Every human being ought to have leisure to enjoy other things besides work; and indeed neither a parson nor a labourer can be "intellectually alert or spiritually progressive" without it. Therefore the Church, I think, and the religious officer of the Church ought to take an interest, and, where necessary,

give a lead here. Different men have different gifts—some may themselves be able, through their own musical knowledge, or dramatic ability, to be actual performers in village music or village drama. But surely it ought not to be above the capacity of any of us to do a little stirring, with the aid of friends if you like, to set such joyful happy things as these and village dancing in motion. Similarly, in securing talks, or lectures on country subjects, or history, or the events of the day, in encouraging self-expression, in stimulating village crafts, in helping forward women's institutes, promoting sound village clubs, and in many other ways the parson may once more be the opener of the doors of knowledge and life. To quote the words of Christopher Holdenby in his stimulating (because critical) chapter on "The Man in Black" in *Folk of the Furrow*, "when the parson sounds the true temper of his flock, the results are such that they make all those desirous of seeing a renewed country life impatient of the many conspicuous failures which seem to bar the way to a strong and general advance." *

IV

I have spoken about co-operation with the parish. Let me say a word now about co-operation with the Diocese. When you are ordained you are ordained by a Bishop. And remember, by the way, that once you are licensed it is to the

**Folk of the Furrow*, p. 198.

Bishop that you are ultimately subject, and the Bishop's written consent as well as three months' notice is required before you can leave your curacy, or before the incumbent can give you notice (six months' notice) to leave the parish. You also promise to pay true and canonical obedience to the Bishop. One great result surely of giving this prominence to the Bishop is to make it impossible for you to be a purely parochial parish priest. You are part of the Bishop's family, the Bishop's household; and you owe it not only to the Bishop but to the family as a whole and to your own parish to keep the connexion open with the Diocese. It is a grave mistake, from every point of view, very starving for themselves and unjust to the Diocese, for clergy never to move outside the immediate circle of their parish—or to attend Diocesan Conferences. I think honestly that a man ought to make it a rule not to be absent at any rate from the Ruri-Decanal Chapter and the Diocesan Conference without a very urgent cause. Don't think I wish to encourage a multiplicity of meetings—far from it. But I think there is a minimum such as I have suggested which loyalty to the Diocese, and to the Church of which the Diocese is a part, ought to oblige us to carry out. Don't, for heaven's sake, shut yourself up into the parish, without a window looking into the larger world. I know that one can commit the very grave fault of never being in one's parish; but the fault of never being in the Diocese (outside your parish) is also very grave. A raucous parochialism, like a raucous nationalism, may be the refuge of the weak.

And with regard to the Bishop himself, do not hesitate to look upon him as your friend, or to go to him in case of difficulty; I don't mean for trifling affairs. He has, after all, a good deal of experience. He is the father of the family, not an inaccessible potentate, and believe me he welcomes personal relations, and personal dealings, and often wishes to know his clergy much better than they, perhaps in their shyness or diffidence, allow him to do. We are an episcopal church, and I think we ought to establish human relations with the diocese of which he is the overseer, and with the Bishop. It was the Bishops themselves who said in the Lambeth Conference of 1920, "We greatly desire that the office of a Bishop should be everywhere exercised in a representative and constitutional manner, and more truly express all that ought to be involved for the life of the Christian family in the title of Father-in-God." (*Report*, p. 28). To such a desire surely we, who wish to be the Church's presbyters, ought, for our part, to respond.

V

I have been speaking about co-operation with the parish and the Diocese. I would say something also about another kind of co-operation, that is of the parson's relation to the ministers of other Churches. It is not, perhaps, surprising that in the strictly ecclesiastical sphere there is not much contact between ourselves and the Roman Catholic clergy. Nor can one pretend

that the Conversations at Malines have received much of a welcome at Westminster. But between individual Roman Catholic clergy and ourselves there are at least occasional friendly relations, leading more often than we sometimes imagine to practical, even if not official, co-operation in social service. And it is perhaps not generally known that the Temperance Council of the Christian Churches has the Archbishop of Canterbury, Cardinal Bourne, and official representatives of the Free Churches and the Salvation Army as its four Joint Presidents. It is true that at the last moment the Roman Catholics withdrew from the Conference on Christian Politics, Economics and Citizenship (Copec) at Birmingham, but this was apparently more on account of theological reasons than through any fundamental objection to co-operation in social affairs with other Christians.

It is, however, with the ministers of the Free Churches that co-operation is most markedly developed.

No doubt the War and its experiences is one of the reasons which has drawn us closer together. Another reason is the *Appeal to all Christian People* issued by the Bishops of the Anglican Communion in the Lambeth Conference of 1920. This Appeal opened a new epoch in the movement for Christian Reunion, and has, during the past seven years, led to a warmth of friendship and a closeness of mutual understanding between Churchmen and Free Churchmen in this country which are without precedent in English religious

history. And at any rate since the Lambeth Appeal and the endorsement of the Resolution which accompanied it by the two Convocations, it is possible to invite, with the Bishop's leave, to preach in our Churches, Free Church ministers who, in the Bishop's judgment, are working towards an ideal of union such as is described in the Appeal. It is also possible for clergy to obtain permission to preach in the Churches of such ministers. It is very necessary that we should know one another, and make friends: that we should, for example, form a ministers' fraternal meeting to discuss various common interests, theological or non-theological: that we should meet together in social service, with or without a special organisation such as a United Christian Social Council. It is most necessary that we should all look forward to and work for a wise Christian Reunion.

The world is partly restive, and partly scornful, at the lack of unity, the lack of fellowship between Christians. And something more than restiveness, something more than disappointment, weighs often on the souls of Christians themselves. Indeed our divisions have the nature of tragedy. They were often at first protests against intolerance or wrong, worldliness or sin, on the part of the dominant section in the Christian community. But however justifiable, or inevitable in their origin, they have in the end spelt weakness for the whole Christian cause, because they have been *exclusive* divisions. There are divisions enough, God knows, without the divisions of the

Church: above all because it is the Church which should be the unifier, and the reconciler of classes, nations and races. How many causes, indeed, there are that cry out for help which the Church of Christ could so much more fully give if it were in love united. It is sad to think that the most conspicuous "International" in the world to-day is not the Christian but the Communist. And what a rebuke to our divided purpose, our half-hearted loyalty as Christian men, that we do so little, as members of the Christian Church, for the great cause of Peace!

In recent years there has without doubt been a great deepening of the desire in all Christian Communions for the Reunion of Christendom. I have spoken of the Lambeth Conference *Appeal;* and I could give actual instances of Union movements, proceeding or achieved, in the Churches of Scotland, in Canada, in South India, in the Methodist Churches in England, as well as in other countries. And a special tribute should be paid to the effort in a particular field, embracing many Churches in England, known as Copec and held in Birmingham, 1924. Widest of all in their range are the Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work held at Stockholm, 1925, and the World Conference on Faith and Order in Lausanne, 1927. These last two, in particular, have witnessed to the longing for the realisation of an International Christian Society, a truly Catholic Church, which finds ever increasing expression on all sides. This is not the place to judge between the various ways in which Christian Unity

may be sought. But let me at least urge this for our practical guidance. It is perfectly possible for different denominations and communions to have their own rules, and to keep their own rules, and rules for their own members; and yet for the members and ministers of these denominations to be united in the great works of the Christian Church, in the great witness of the Christian faith, and in the performance of the common Christian task. It has indeed proved possible to hold common Christian worship in which ministers of Episcopal, including Greek Orthodox, and non-Episcopal Churches of many countries have taken part at Stockholm and at Lausanne: and, under proper sanctions, such united worship may, from time to time, be offered in England. Indeed, though we are not yet in communion with one another, common prayer and common praise are possible, and I should myself welcome some authorized form of united common prayer which could be used on special occasions outside and apart from our traditional liturgical Services and our appointed sermons when we decided in some special way to express our fellowship—especially our Christian international fellowship—with one another and ask God's blessing upon it.

To turn in particular to the Free Churches, these societies of Christian people, though now separated from us, have their "rich elements of truth, liberty and life"; and their extinction would involve, more often than not, the loss of this wealth. Similarly the ministers of these other societies, especially those Free Churches with

whose representatives the Archbishops and certain Bishops conferred on the Lambeth Appeal, 1921-5, stand for very real spiritual riches in the common Christian life: and (to quote what the Archbishops and twelve Bishops said in 1923) exercise "real ministries of Christ's Word and Sacraments in the Universal Church."* Some day, God grant our prayer, these various communions will be more fully joined with ourselves, in visible communion within the Universal Church. But to-day we are, if we could only believe it, united in far deeper things, and far greater things than the things that divide us. Let us not insist on our *divisions*, but cherish and express our far greater agreement. Nor let us be so absorbed in Anglicanism as to forget the Catholic Church. Said the Bishops in their *Appeal*, "We acknowledge all those who believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, and have been baptized into the name of the Holy Trinity, as sharing with us membership in the Universal Church of Christ which is His Body." Let this acknowledgment be expressed by us in disposition and in deed.

**The Church of England and the Free Churches. Proceedings of Joint Conferences held at Lambeth Palace, 1921-25.* Bell and Robertson. 1925. p. 46.

CHAPTER IV

THE TEACHER AND THE PRIEST

THERE are two aspects of a parson's work which may be roughly described as the prophetic and the priestly. Let me begin with the prophetic.

I

The parson is the teacher of his people. A very important part of that ministry of teaching will be in church. It is true that the preacher is not now the only or even the chief instrument for conveying instruction or information to the public. The drama, which was once the product of the Church, the novel, the press, the film, the wireless, attack men's minds, eyes and ears, and never cease: and all of them, some most powerfully, are the means of communicating new ideas or enforcing old. But this does not mean that the preacher has no useful function to fulfil. On the contrary, though great preachers are rare at the present day, those who do appear are sure of a welcome in whatever denomination they are found: and men with a message, though not

acclaimed as great preachers, will always command an eager and responsive congregation. I do not think there is any heresy about the work of a clergyman more perverse than the opinion which disparages sermons, and exalts the altar *at the expense* of the pulpit. Rightly conceived the sermon is itself a sacrament—the conveying of God's Word through the medium of human personality to the heart and conscience of men. And there are few things in the outward working of your ministry that I would urge upon you more than the need of taking immense pains with your sermons, and with preparing yourself as preacher.

Men vary, and conditions vary, and it is foolish to fix a standard which is expected to apply to all parishes alike. But we have to face facts in connexion with our sermons, if they are to be effective at all. The wide extension of education makes a difference to the attitude of congregations. I do not say that the education goes very deep. Unfortunately it does not: and there is an immense amount about of that "little knowledge" which is so dangerous. But people can read, and do read the picture papers at least, they often read news paragraphs and articles, and even novels and cheap books, some very good, some very bad. You are not, therefore, preaching to an entirely simple congregation. Again the immense amount of distraction that there is nowadays makes a difference to the attitude of congregations. They can no longer attend as they used to do. Long sermons therefore (unless they are the work of a genius) are not to be commended. A clergy-

man whom I know preaches regularly in a church not far from London for forty minutes, and complains that people do not come to hear him. When a thoughtful member of the congregation suggested that the sermons might be shorter he said that he had a message which he must deliver. But, as the thoughtful layman observed, a message at that length is of little use if delivered Sunday after Sunday to empty pews. After all, we want people to give their attention to the preacher: and you will inevitably destroy it if you go on too long, and if you have the reputation of length there will be nobody but the inordinately faithful left to attend.

As to the sermons themselves, it is important that they should be straightforward and sincere—and not out of touch with daily experience. They must not be made entirely in the study. Reading is most useful. Visiting is of very great importance. Observation and conversation are useful. Some people have a greater aptitude for relating what they say to ordinary life than others: but we are all human ourselves, and can all put humanity into our sermons if we will. Bishop Latimer gives us some good lessons. So do Frederick Robertson and Phillips Brooks. So does Studdert Kennedy. And for a sermon which comes straight out of the life of the congregation to which it was addressed by one of themselves let me commend Father Mapple's sermon in Melville's novel *Moby Dick*.*

I say that we shall find that different parishes

**Moby Dick*, ch. ix.

want different things, different kinds of sermons even. We must know the men and women to whom we preach, if we wish to help them. But I believe most men, at the present day, are ready to hear sermons as to what Christianity actually means—though the sermons may be very differently constructed for different congregations. People want to know about the big things in our religion—they want to be taught the answers which Christianity gives to the ordinary difficulties which are of almost universal experience, the problem of suffering, of evil, who or what God is, evolution. And they are ready for help in dealing with the problems of personal life and conduct; with prayer; and to be taught the light that the Bible, and the teaching of Jesus throw on these things, which are ever old and ever new. Courses of sermons on the Parables, on the great truths of the Christian Religion, on the laws of the good life, are listened to with eagerness. But above all things let the preacher avoid the appearance of omniscience. A reverent agnosticism, a sense of the mystery of life, the mystery of God, will both commend what you say to thoughtful people and will be more in accordance with truth. And may I add this warning? Some people complain that little teaching is given in a particular pulpit because they have in their mind instructions that concern themselves with matters that are mainly ecclesiastical in character. We want Church teaching (in the narrow sense) from time to time—but to make it supreme, is, I think, to fail in a sense of proportion which will

be disastrous from the point of view of evangelizing, or converting, or persuading the indifferent, or the enemy, or the sinner. Professor Mahaffy, in his Essay on *The Decay of Modern Preaching*, takes it for granted that preaching to-day is the mere reiteration of accepted doctrine to a settled and believing Christian congregation; and he assumes that it is absurd to imagine that preaching in the nineteenth or twentieth century can be anything but flat and uninteresting, when the preachers have not the advantage which the Apostles had of proclaiming a new faith in a world of old and decrepit religions. "The orthodox preacher, who is merely expounding received dogmas to his hearers, who tells them what they know very well already—nay, who is regarded with suspicion or dislike if he ventures on anything new—how can he hope to rival the early pioneers of his creed? It is indeed unreasonable to expect it." (p. 16). *It is indeed unreasonable to expect it*—if the preacher simply regards his sermon as a discourse to the faithful, and shuts every window in his mind, conscience and heart, to the masses, untouched, unconverted outside! There is a movement at the present day, away from institutions and creeds. It may be one-sided, but we shall be very wrong to condemn it out of hand, or to forget how deep is its appreciation of religious experience. Let us preach religion always with a mind open to those who are not orthodox churchmen, or regular churchgoers, or converted souls; and let us preach it neither as a set of doctrines, nor a code of morals, nor a system of self-help, or self-advance, but as

a life in itself, as the great quickener of our thoughts and aspirations, as the best means of union with One infinitely Great, yet infinitely human and real, as communion with God.

II

There is another grave responsibility which rests upon the preacher of to-day. I have already referred to the difference which education makes to the intelligence, and thus to the needs of a congregation. A great deal of public opinion is now formed by the reading of novels, and the reading of newspapers. The publication, and therefore I suppose the reading, of novels seem never to cease. And the moral judgments of many people, not least in what are called the educated classes, are really formed by the novels they read. Novels and plays (for plays are now becoming a more and more popular form of literature) are constantly, one might almost say continually, occupied with moral questions. Young men or young women will often receive their only teaching, for example, about marriage and its claims, from novels. Such readers have a vague idea that the teaching in the novels is opposed to what they imagine to be the teaching of the Church. But they probably only have a negative notion of what that teaching is, and the attempt of the novelist to give a constructive teaching cannot fail to arrest, and has a much greater chance of attracting (or unsettling) when opposed only to ignorance

or misconception. Now, I do not suggest that the newly ordained should attempt a course of sermons on Christian Marriage in the first month or the first year of his ministry. But I do ask you to remember that teaching on Christian Marriage is very necessary teaching—very seldom given—and that to give it properly and persuasively will, once again, require reading and thought. I take Christian Marriage as a very important example of a subject on which the educated classes especially are often left to fend for themselves. But there are other subjects, which will occur to you all: and I would advise you earnestly to read the novels and the plays which lay people are reading—so as to be in touch with their thoughts, and their questions, and to think with seriousness and with prayer of what it is that your fellow-readers, the modern men and women of to-day, need, and of how you can be helped to supply their need.

I remarked, a few sentences back, that sermons must not be made entirely in the study. What I have just said will, I hope, make it plain that work in the study and genuine reading are vital to the clergyman who really wishes to keep fresh and alive. It is so easy for us to cease thinking and to cease reading after our last examination is passed. And to tell truth, the clergy, like other people, are apt quite suddenly to stop thinking, in the large sense, altogether: and accordingly, when a fresh intellectual problem comes along, they are often quite unfit to attack it, and remain blissfully unconscious of their unfitness. I would,

therefore, beg you with all the force I can to keep up your reading, to get hold of a good new big book from time to time. And to make a practical suggestion, I would earnestly ask you to join the Central Society for Sacred Study,* and follow some part or other of their yearly course of study, a course admirably planned by the very best theologians for the guidance of the clergy in particular.

III

In addition to his work of preaching in church, every clergyman has opportunities for teaching outside it. I am not going to speak of Sunday Schools, Bible Classes, Confirmation Classes, Guilds and such like, except to say that rightly used they all provide a chance for an interpretation of religion and for giving a new ideal of life and the discipline of prayer of a very vital kind, while taken as a matter of course instead of as an adventure they become, oh, so stale! Let me take, simply by way of example, two important branches of teaching in which, as I think, it is very important for the future of Christianity in England that the clergy of to-day and to-morrow should take a new and larger view.

The first concerns what is called religious education in elementary schools. This is a sub-

*Central Society for Sacred Study, General Secretary, The Rev. Dr. Kidd, Keble College, Oxford; Treasurer, F. H. Colson, Esq., 23 Grange Road, Cambridge. Annual Subscription, 2/6.

ject on which controversy has been bitter and keen, and in the present day it arouses a good deal of hot discussion on different sides.

There are in England at the present day five and a half million children receiving elementary education. Just under two million of these children are being educated in what are called non-provided or voluntary schools, because they were built by voluntary societies, the Church of England, the Wesleyans, the Roman Catholics, and other religious bodies. The remaining three and a half million are receiving education in Council or provided schools, so called because they were built by the local authority, the County Council or whatever it might be, with the help of a grant from the Board of Education.

The voluntary schools were built long before the Council schools, for the Church of England and other religious societies were awake to the importance of education for the working classes long before the State woke up to the need. In fact it was not till 1870 that Parliament really began to take notice to good effect.

Further, in the voluntary schools, which were at first entirely supported by voluntary contributions and school fees, the whole curriculum was founded on a basis of definite religious teaching. But in the Council schools, set up by legislation in 1870, there is no absolute legal requirement that any religious teaching at all shall be given, and there is a legal limitation, known as the Cowper Temple Clause, which says that if any religious teaching is given it shall not be

"any particular form of religious instruction or any religious catechism or formulary which is distinctive of any particular denomination." As a matter of fact religious teaching is given in practically all Council Schools, but there is no *guarantee* that it should be well given, or that the teacher should be qualified to give it, and beyond question there is room for improvement.

At the present moment, as I have said, there is a good deal of discussion about the future rearrangement of Church schools, and grouping for central schools. A good many Church schools are now out of date—most were built before 1870, and long before the leaving-age was even as old as eleven (1893). And the Church is being asked to give large sums of money to repair schools and get them more up to the standard which they ought to attain. And many schools are dropping out through sheer exhaustion.

This is hardly the moment to enter upon the details of the educational debate. But the point which I wish to press upon you as future clergy of the Church of England is this.

The Church has been a pioneer in all branches of education, university, secondary, primary. But it does not follow that a pioneer, who shows the way, can for ever bear the whole burden of the course which he has opened out. The pioneer blazes the trail—and necessarily if he has discovered a good trail others, with greater permanent resources, follow on, and develop it. The Church has thus led the way in education. We may well be proud, and the State may well be grateful, for the good

work which our ancestors did. But now that the State covers an ever widening field, and develops education in all departments, with ever increasing power—the Church should surely co-operate in such development, and at the same time do its very best to secure that all education shall be in the highest sense religious. Let us not then be too easily persuaded by the arguments of those who simply concentrate on "saving" Church Schools at all costs, without a view of the whole field affected. The number of children in Church Schools has been steadily declining, a drop in fifteen years of 1,400 schools and 700,000 children. What I venture to say we ought to consider most of all is not Church schools and their scholars, or the parson's rights in these schools, but the children of the whole country in all sorts of schools; not the two million in voluntary schools as against the three and a half million in Council Schools, but the five and a half million altogether. And I venture also to claim that the sincerity and competence of the teacher who gives the instruction is a far more important factor in religious education than the catechism, or the formulary set down on paper to be taught. I hope that the ultimate solution of our present difficulties may allow a definite place to denominational schools as such, and give the denominational principle a generous recognition in areas of sufficient size. And I believe that the Church will be right if it seeks to retain certain key schools in selected areas as Church schools, and even build new central or "modern" Church Schools. And certainly we

should do everything we can to secure that the students in training colleges should have the fullest help in methods of giving religious instruction: and the fullest assistance and facilities when they have joined the profession. But it is foolish —and may be disastrous—to hide from ourselves the certainty that great changes are inevitable in the whole system of primary and post-primary education, great changes which sooner or later will affect Church schools on a large scale. It is foolish and wrong, for the Church, the pioneer, to stay still or to adopt a purely negative policy. Our general aim ought, surely, to be the securing of systematic and genuine Christian teaching in *all* Schools, not forgetting the part that worship plays in such teaching. If we can get this, then we ought to be prepared to make great concessions in the matter of control.

May I add that the conclusions which I express receive an added significance in view of the Report on *The Education of the Adolescent* (1926) by the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education? That Report calls attention to the tide which begins to rise in the veins of youth at the age of eleven or twelve: and the need, in the interests of the children and the nation, of taking that tide at the flood by transferring all children on reaching the age of eleven from primary schools to post-primary schools, for a form of education which has a greater variety and range. Now it is, I say, to the interest of the children that the passing from the one kind of school to the other should be made as easily as possible. Church schools

can check the flow, can therefore cripple the education of children over eleven, if they will. The reason which might lead some Church schools to keep the children in their own buildings, instead of sending them on to the new so-called "modern" schools,* would be fear of the loss of Church influence or denominational teaching. Well, it is to the interests of us all, and not least, if you take a long view, of the Church teaching, to come to some agreement whereby religious teaching can be sincerely and competently given in all these schools. "The welfare of the nation at large will be advanced by the growth of such schools; and the voluntary societies have the power to aid or retard that growth. If they promote arrangements for the satisfaction of their needs in such Modern Schools controlled by the public authority, they will be aiding the better education of the youth of England at its most crucial stage of development, and they will be aiding thereby the betterment of England at large. If they oppose the transference of children to Modern Schools, and prefer their retention, up to the age of fourteen, in senior classes conducted in elementary schools, they will be hindering the growth of Modern Schools, with all their possibilities, and they may also be hindering the highest development of the children themselves." (*Report*, p. 170).

The second branch of religious education about which I will only say one word is the religious education of grown men and women through

*Similar to the present "Central Schools."

tutorial classes. This is a method for giving systematic religious instruction, of a high standard, to classes of men and women, guided by a tutor for a period of three years. It meets a genuine need for real study and inquiry on the part of serious-minded people who, without such a system, often lack any means of clear thinking, and genuine knowledge. There are various courses which a class may follow, and books specially written in connexion with this system are gradually appearing. The method is one of combined lecture and discussion. The lecturer will lecture for, say, an hour, and for the next hour or less the class will ask questions. The discussion is quite as important as the lecture—for the object of both is to make people think, and the lecturer will succeed just in proportion as he has been able to encourage questions bearing on his subject when his own talking upon it is over. A Church tutorial class, as it is called, with a three years' course such as Old Testament, New Testament, and Church History, is a fine example of co-operation in religious education, and in its present form a new method of arousing interest and satisfying inquiry in religious questions which thoroughly deserves our support. Any particulars with regard to the movement may be got from the Secretary, Church Tutorial Classes Association, 16 Russell Square, London, W.C. And I should like to suggest that, if appeals for large funds for religious education are to be made to-day, the possibility of new experiments in adult religious education, summer

schools, or even adult people's schools for general education under Church auspices should be carefully considered. For I believe that if the Church could once again be a pioneer in this branch of *adult education* she would here again earn the gratitude of the community.*

IV

I turn now to the second or priestly aspect of a modern parson's work. As prophet the parson is preacher and teacher. As priest he is the minister of the mysteries of God—charged with the high privilege of leading the people in worship. Let me quote a celebrated writer on liturgical subjects of the last century:

> "I know nothing that is higher or more fair than the worship of my Lord; there all man's arts combine in the service of adoration; there is his countenance transfigured, his very form and voice made new; there he giveth God the glory; yea, the holy Liturgy of the Church surpasseth all the Poetry of the World."* (William Löhe).

I am sure that in days like these we are not likely to undervalue the importance of worship. Everywhere there is a great uprising of interest in the methods of offering of praise and prayer to God; in the Roman Catholic Church, in the Ortho-

* Quoted in *The Spirit of Worship*. F. Heiler. 1926. p. viii.

dox Church, in certain sections of the Protestant Churches on the continent, in the English Free Churches, and not least in the Church of England. I could give you instances, but it is enough to refer to a most suggestive account of this development in Friedrich Heiler's *Spirit of Worship*. The growth of interest in worship implies most certainly the lifting up of the heart from ourselves to God, a hunger for the objective, the real, which only God can satisfy. But, since it is not concerned with a merely individual devotion, but with the services of the Church, we are not surprised to find that it, as a rule, possesses another characteristic—the desire to give the congregation a more intimate share in the worship offered to God. Among the Romans, for example, we find a movement for making the Mass a truly congregational act: in some parts of Russia and Bulgaria the congregation make the responses instead of the choir: and I am sure that in the Church of England any tendency to withdraw or minimise the share of the people and exaggerate the part of the priest in the service of Holy Communion, for example, would be a backward tendency rather than a tendency to advance.

This leads me to emphasise two points in particular. First, let the Church in which you serve really witness to God—recall the presence of God—be clearly a sanctuary of prayer; let your own attitude in Church be an attitude of reverence, and recollection; and let the services, so far as you can affect them by your own actions,

bear witness to God. Let there be no rushing, no mumbling or drawling, no eagerness to be done, no obvious inattention, no conventionality or unreality.

Second, try and draw in the congregation to share the worship with you. And I mean this not simply with regard to their responsiveness in a particular service, but with regard to their participation in the services as a whole. A parish priest has his whole parish to consider. And while in towns where there are plenty of churches a variety of worship is a very good thing, different uses being very properly found in different parish churches, a country vicar has a much more difficult task. I cannot help thinking that a country vicar who, in what may be called a single church area, introduces an extreme service, whatever extreme it represents, with the shortest notice or without any notice at all, is doing real harm to the religion of the countryside. We must not think of what *we* like, or even what a society to which we belong considers ideal, but we must consider the training, the sympathies, and the traditions of those who join with us in the public worship of God. We want to draw the congregation further into our church, further into our services, to co-operate with them in learning and in teaching, and we should be very slow indeed before allowing any action of ours to drive them out of doors. For that reason, and others, I am glad to find that at the very forefront of the Revised Prayer Book this general rubric has been placed:

"Inasmuch as it is not to be desired that changes, even when sanctioned by this Book, should be made in the customary arrangement and conduct of Divine Service arbitrarily or without the good will of the people, as represented in the Parochial Church Council, any question which may arise between the Minister of the parish and the people as so represented, with regard to such changes, shall stand referred to the Bishop of the Diocese, who, after such consultation as he shall think best, both with the Minister and with the people, shall make orders thereupon, and those orders shall be final, provided they be not contrary to anything contained in this Book."

V

It is not possible to attach too much importance to the Service of Holy Communion in man's offering of worship to God. But it is possible to emphasise that importance in ways which, however real to oneself, are in fact unreal to others whose spiritual experience has come to them on different lines. The Eucharist has its human as well as its divine side; and (difficult as it may be for some to believe it) the very awe and solemnity of the Eucharist actually makes not a few genuinely devout men and women averse to a too frequent communion, lest by repetition it become for them "common." And we must not forget that, though we are familiar with the daily celebration,

and though the weekly celebration is now nearly universal, it is not so many years since the Eucharist was administered only once a month or even once a quarter. While, therefore, we may insist that the Eucharist should be the principal Sunday Service—this does not at all necessarily lead to the conclusion that we celebrate it every Sunday morning at 10.30 or 11 o'clock. In some churches, in many churches, that may well be right; but do please let us aim at making the Sunday services the offering of the *parish*—of Christ's flock in the parish—of the people with the priest; (not the priest alone or with a few of the specially devout); and let the service be, therefore, the kind of service in which Christ's flock in the parish can sincerely and readily join. A priest may, perhaps, in time, find that his parish wants to offer the Holy Eucharist as the regular choral service of the Sunday morning. But it seems to me to be an offence, not only against the parish but against God, for a priest to force such a Service upon his people, whether they are ready for it or no: an offence which is not less grave when it sometimes leads to the practical excommunication of many people who though they may be illogical, conservative, shy, are yet true and faithful members of the Church with the fullest claim on the consideration of its priests.

VI

Is Church-going an end in itself, or the essence of religion? Put like that, I think, we should

all, probably, answer "No, it is not quite that." And undoubtedly we must not make the mistake of thinking that very small congregations necessarily imply very little religion on the part of the parishioners. Miss Loane, in her very valuable study of working class conditions, called *The Queen's Poor*, writes:

> "To count up the churchgoers and chapelgoers, compare the resulting number with the population, and then, if there should be a great disparity, argue that the neighbourhood is without religion; or to estimate the proportion of children and young persons in places of worship, and then say 'religion has no hold on them when they get older,' is a most serious error. It is a confusion of formal outward signs and inward spiritual graces. Many of the poor rarely attend church, not because they are irreligious but because they have long since received and absorbed the truths by which they live; while the idea that attendance at public worship is a duty does not occur to them, and does not seem credible when suggested. To put on one's best clothes, to be surrounded by neighbours in theirs, to sit in a large, well-lighted, well-warmed and beautifully decorated building, to hear the organ, to join in the singing, all this differs from anything they are accustomed to call duty. It is a pleasure, and, like most pleasures, must be left chiefly for the young. . . . To such persons it seems as natural that the young should go to church,

or chapel and the middle-aged and old remain at home, as that children should go to school and young men to the workshop." And she reports them as saying, after some zealous curates had been visiting them: "Do they think there was no teachers when we was young? Things is changed, but there was always ways o' learning, and there always will be." (*op. cit.* pp. 28-30).

I think it well to have it put as Miss Loane puts it, but I do not think it represents the whole truth. Churchgoing is not an end in itself—but it is a means to communion with God which very few can afford to neglect. It helps the religious attitude. It is a safeguard against individualism. In a church of which the minister and people join together it makes for the realization of the presence of God.

But, you may say, what are we to do when people do not as a fact go to church, and yet are, we believe, Christian-minded men? I was talking not long ago on just this point to a layman of just that character. He suggested that the clergy too readily assumed that because laymen did not go to the services which were actually given in the parish church there were no services to which they would go. He begged that we should take them more into our confidence; ask their advice; they would call themselves Christians and, he said, you should talk to them in an unprofessional way about what could be done, what they objected to, what they would like, not necessarily as

interfering with the regular set services, but supplementary to them. I am sure he was right. I am sure that if we could get the confidence of such laymen and laywomen, and did not look upon Matins and Evensong or Holy Communion as the only conceivable services of the Church of England (though, of course, they must be the main regular services) we should find means of persuading men and women to join with us in the worship of God, to their good and ours, who do not now in fact enter the church. Here, too, co-operation with the congregation—with the parish—with the laity, is very much to be desired.

There is room for imagination in our services, in the use of our church buildings, and as the Bishops some time ago suggested, much greater freedom is possible in the naves of churches and cathedrals, than in the choir and nave together. There is need for consultation as to hours of services, and the time as well as the form of special services. There is room for discovering ways in which different classes of people can relate their daily work to the worship of God. How can the artist offer his picture to God? or the carpenter his table? or the actor his playing? There is room for discovering a much wider scope for the laity in the actual conduct of church services. I know there is a shyness on the part of the laity about what is generally considered the parson's preserve. But I cannot help thinking that the shortage of clergy may prove a blessing in disguise if we stiffen the standard of admission to

the ministry on the one hand, and on the other hand are really forced into making the laity take some of the services themselves.

VII

I have already made a single allusion to that pastoral visitation which is one of the special marks of the Church of England. It is as important to-day as it has ever been; though I fear this is not always recognised in practice as it should be. Indeed it is difficult to exaggerate its importance. But the point which I wish to press upon you at this moment relates to something which is supplementary to the regular visiting of your people. I am sure that we clergy ought deliberately to give far more opportunities than we do give for religious consultation. These opportunities are in a way more difficult to give to the "educated classes" than in working class parishes; and yet they are far more pathetically needed. A friend of my own who has had quite unusual experience in dealing with educated young women between eighteen and thirty-five tells me that he has often been struck with the extraordinary matter-of-course way in which he is told: "No, I couldn't possibly talk to Mr. So-and-So (her Vicar) on subjects like that. I know him very well. But you see we are only social acquaintances." Yet these young women, and young men, and older people of both sexes, have their very serious

religious and moral problems. They want spiritual help. We are meant to be the people to give them that help. And it seems a real tragedy if we do not appear the natural people to approach, if we do not seek ways in which we can fit ourselves to offer that guidance and the sympathy they require. Read Bishop G. H. Wilkinson's *Memoir* for hints as to ways of helping—though his actual methods may well be foreign and unnatural to some of us.* Pray for those you meet and see and work amongst; with true sympathy and imagination, trying to picture to yourselves the kind of lives they lead, the kind of difficulties they might feel, the kind of problems which they have to face. You will be surprised to find how much such sympathetic prayer will teach you with regard to help in individual cases. And let me suggest also that you have a definite time —known to your people—when you are at home for consultation, and men and women can come to you (as they might come to a physician) with their spiritual troubles. Whether people come to you or not will depend on many things (not all of them by any means under your own control) —but *partly* on the sincerity of your own life; and it may be well to add that a train of thought started by a sermon may be another ground of approach, which in itself must be another reason for taking the greatest trouble with our sermons.

May I remind you also that the Church of England has, in her wisdom, put into our hands the special instrument of confession, for the pur-

**Memoir of George Howard Wilkinson.* A. J. Mason. 1909.

pose of helping those who cannot quieten their consciences by themselves. "If there be any of you, who . . . cannot quiet his own conscience . . . let him come to me, or to some other discreet and learned Minister of God's Word, and open his grief; that by the ministry of God's holy Word he may receive the benefit of absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice."* The Church of England commends confession, as a medicine, mark you, not as a food: as a voluntary aid, not as a necessary obligation. And I think that it is well—when we have been in Holy Orders some little while and can use a right judgment—that we should make it known, from time to time, that one part of the ministry to which Christ's priests are called is that of helping those who need "the benefit of absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice."

*The Communion. End of First Exhortation. C.f. The Visitation of the Sick.

CHAPTER V

MANY CHANNELS

THERE is no doubt that the clergyman of whom we think as characteristic of his calling is the clergyman working in the parish: the rector, the vicar and the assistant curate. And we are right in thinking this, and in valuing the parish priest, the *pastor in parochia*, in a very special way. Nor does his value grow less, or his opportunity smaller, in the face of modern conditions, as indeed I have attempted to suggest in previous lectures. But in the present lecture I want to put before you certain other channels in which a clergyman may work. I want to suggest that however greatly and properly the parochial aspect of the clergyman's work may predominate it is not the only aspect, and that there are other types, and kinds of clergy. Indeed, if we pause a little to think of the different kinds of work which a clergyman can do we shall be surprised by the extensiveness and the variety of that work. There is work in Cathedrals, in universities, in theological colleges, in schools, as chaplains to the Forces, as prison chaplains, hospital chaplains, chaplains in mental hospitals, chaplains in poor law insti-

tutions, as members of religious communities, as conductors of retreats, as diocesan missioners, as priests in the Church overseas, as Indian chaplains, as chaplains in the merchant service, as continental chaplains, as Toc H chaplains, as librarians, as secretaries of religious societies, as diocesan directors of education, to say nothing of the work done by clergy as writers, journalists, lecturers, welfare-workers, and in other capacities in which a clergyman acts, not so much as a clergyman pure and simple, as because he has special literary or other gifts which he may still employ, clergyman though he be.

I

It is not possible to speak of all these channels of work individually, but I will take a few of the channels, as types of the rest, and speak of them in a more particular way.

(1) The work of the Church overseas is in many ways of the very first importance; and it makes an increasing appeal to the clergy to-day. The World Call of the Church, commencing in 1926, has given a new impetus and scope to the whole vocation of priesthood, and those who are ordained have come to realise more practically than before that they are commissioned to the Ministry of the Church, not for England alone, but for the whole Church of Christ. The variety of this work is such that it demands a book in itself; and, indeed, several books have been written

very recently indeed on *The Call from India*, *The Call from the Far East*, *The Call from our Own People Overseas*, *The Call from Africa*, etc. The world is indeed at our ears, and the variety of the work which is possible here is even greater than that which is possible in England. Those engaged in it may have to do with some of the fundamental problems of to-day, problems of religion, problems of civilization, problems of race, as well as the never-ceasing problem of education. Everyone should face the question of serving overseas. And, whether serving overseas or not, everyone should keep himself informed and alive to the work, the opportunities and the needs of the overseas world. And in addition to books like *Christianity and the Race Problem* (J. H. Oldham), or *Indian Problems* (Bishop Whitehead), let him read periodicals like *The International Review of Missions*, and *The Church Overseas*, and let him make the overseas work of the Church a part of his prayers.

II

(2) I would, however, deal to-day with work nearer home, and, for a start, group together the various openings in the field of education. It is not everybody's work, from the point of view either of qualification or of inclination. But it is very important work. A college tutor, or a lecturer, or the warden of a Church hostel in a modern university, is entrusted with opportunities of a very rare, though very difficult, kind. And

I should like to remind you of the great tribute once paid by Canon Liddon to the calling of an Oxford or Cambridge don, in a sermon preached on The Moral Value of a Mission from Christ, in Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford:

"Too often a college title is contrasted with a parochial one, as if a life spent within college walls here in Oxford afforded no opportunities for strictly clerical work. Yet how great is the need of men chosen and ordained by Jesus Christ that they should go and bring forth fruit in such a field as that of this University, they best know who live here.

"Here, as elsewhere, sin is rife; here, as elsewhere, the eternal contest between good and evil rages uninterruptedly; here souls are to be won by the same spiritual activities, by the same heart-subduing truths, as elsewhere. But here there are special anxieties which may well invite the earnest attention of those among Christ's servants who have opportunities of grappling with them. Elsewhere attention may be concentrated upon controversies which are not without grave importance, yet which certainly are less fundamental than those which have become well-nigh chronic here. . . . Who can watch, even distantly, the oft-repeated spectacle of intellectual perplexity, struggle, anguish, and even despair, without praying the Lord of the Vineyard to choose and ordain among His servants, in this place, men who can bring effective help in our present deep necessities? For, from this centre of English intellectual life, truth or falsehood alike radiate, with terrible

swiftness, throughout our Church and country. What is here said in the ear, by a tutor, to a group of pupils, is soon, through the vast machinery by which educated thought finds expression, proclaimed, for good or evil, upon the housetops of the land. Surely, if the sense of a mission from Christ be needed anywhere, to give zeal, decision, encouragement, patience, it is needed in a clerical fellow of a college of our day in Oxford."

Canon Liddon is speaking of tutors in the ancient universities, but when we remember the "machinery through which educated thought finds expression" we may apply what he says as well to those who have the difficult and perhaps somewhat more restricted opportunities which the warden of a hostel or the holder of an unofficial chaplaincy in such modern universities as Manchester or Reading or Sheffield enjoys. It may not come your way to hold this sort of post, but remember that it is a very difficult sort of post, that men with qualifications for this kind of work should be encouraged to undertake it, and that held by the right man it is in the best sense of the word influential for good, though its results at the moment may be unseen.

Opportunities also of an important kind are afforded to a schoolmaster in Holy Orders. In former days most schoolmasters were ordained, and while it is not so now, and though lay schoolmasters often do very fine moral and religious work, still a clergyman, if he is the right sort, by his influence in school, in chapel, and in the boy's home, can do very much indeed.

The educational openings of which I have just spoken are not necessarily in any way theological in character. But there are posts which in one form or other have theology definitely in view. It would be presumption on my part to speak to theological students of the work of chaplains and higher officers in theological colleges; its importance is self-evident; and it has a right to claim the service of the very best teachers in the Church of England.

Let me pass to the diocese and the parish. Education for worship, education for Church-membership, is, I believe, the most pressing need of the day. And there are signs of an increasing demand for such education: on the part of teachers in our Sunday Schools, on the part of teachers in day schools, and of our regular congregation. All this education will want direction, and some of it can be given by the parish clergy; but I have little doubt that whether as teachers or lecturers, or tutors in classes for adult students, a limited number of clergy will be required to be at the disposal of the Bishop, or still better, under the Bishop, of a Director of Religious Education. I think that the future holds very definite possibilities of this character.

(3) I have spoken of, or hinted at, a diocesan policy in education. There are other posts of a diocesan character which may fall to a clergyman's lot. For example there is the post of Bishop's chaplain, now unfortunately not so common as twenty years ago. We know, of course, that Bishops' chaplains do not always appear in the

most amiable light in fiction. I think of Mr. Slope, the chaplain to Bishop Proudie in *Barchester Towers*. But I strongly advise anyone who has the chance of becoming chaplain to a Bishop, after a year or two of parish life, to take it. It has its tiresome side no doubt. But I can speak from full knowledge when I claim that the experience gained from working for and in close personal touch with a Diocesan Bishop gives you a breadth of outlook, and an idea of the width of the Church's life, and the diversity of people and problems with which a living Church has to deal, that you can get in no other way, and that will be a very great asset to you in your own parochial life hereafter. It helps you to look beyond your own immediate boundaries, and parish, and that is in itself a very good thing. It also makes you a little less positive, and a little more tolerant to opposing views.

Again, there are posts in Cathedrals which have not only an interest but an opportunity of their own—if they are filled by men who wish to secure, so far as they can, that the Cathedral is the centre and home of the diocese as a whole. A minor canon, to take the most obvious post, is not to be merely a singing priest, and having sung the offices then to have done with the Cathedral. On the contrary, if he is the right kind of man, the singing is only one incident in his work; he will set himself certainly to see that the praises of God are sung worthily, and that the Divine Service is beautifully and nobly conducted, and he will also see how far he can help all who come within

its walls to hear God speaking through the Cathedral, and how far from the Cathedral he can help the parishes in the Diocese raise the standard of their worship; or how far perhaps, if his gifts lie in that direction, he can help, for example, in the work of education. In all ways his ideal will be that the Cathedral shall be seen to be both the House of God and the home of the family, the diocese.

III

(4) Let me pass from educational and diocesan posts to other posts which appeal to special interests and special gifts. Some of the most interesting, to men whose interests lie in that field, are chaplaincies in hospitals for the sick. Certainly work of this kind is Christian ministry in a very special degree. It is not easy, and it can be done very conventionally and very badly; but it offers great opportunities. Some men and women, it may be, are never open to any advances, be the chaplain who he may. But many welcome the chance of friendship, and, little by little, of serious talk: while to some the illness in hospital may prove the turning point in their careers—a new revelation of what life means, a deeper understanding of the Christian faith. It needs patience, and courage in the chaplain. It is work which taxes heart and mind. But, as many can testify from what chaplains themselves have told them, or from what matrons or doctors have said,

the work of a good chaplain bears untold fruit. Clearly it is not the business of a chaplain to have anything whatever to do with the medicinal treatment of a patient. But, as some of the best doctors recognise, a chaplain may make a definite contribution indirectly to a patient's cure, by the atmosphere of confidence and self-control which he can bring with him, by indirectly freeing the patient's mind of fear and anxiety, and turning his thoughts to something outside himself. I think that in this connexion it is worth while calling attention to the increased importance which is being attached in scientific and medical circles to the moral factor in the recovery of the sick. And there is a good deal of very valuable evidence on this point in the interesting *Report of the War Office Committee of Enquiry into "Shell-Shock,"* (1922). "The most important document received with the patient," says one distinguished medical witness, "was generally the conduct sheet" (p. 28). "The study of character is regarded by the committee as an important factor in all training for staff and executive officers alike" (p. 151). And "military and medical witnesses were unanimous in insisting that good morale and all that it implies is the first essential factor in diminishing the incidence of mental disorders" (p. 190). It is true that the Committee were concerned with mental disorders in particular, but it is clear that the moral factor is not only of use for preventing and curing mental disorders, but for dealing with illness of any kind; and with this most of the distinguished

doctors whose evidence was given would cordially agree. And all this implies not, I am afraid, that the chaplain will automatically be brought in to aid the doctor in the work of recovery (for some chaplains, alas! have been most unwise and unhelpful), but that the right kind of chaplain has an opportunity of a remarkable kind for bringing his contribution to bear. This spiritual contribution has been admirably described in the Report of the Lambeth Conference Committee on *The Ministry of Healing* as at bottom the purifying and strengthening of the whole life, especially the spiritual life, as the centre of personality. "This it seems to do by awakening the sense of the Power and the Love of God, by emphasizing the true relationship of the patient to God, and by helping him to realize the healing presence of Christ."

I have been speaking of a hospital chaplain's work among the patients. But an important part of his work, especially in a big hospital, will be his relations with the nurses and the medical staff and the medical students. The former in particular, I know from constant testimony, value the ministrations of a really wise and careful chaplain very greatly; and such a chaplain can help both them in their own lives, and through them the patients whose welfare depends so much on the character and goodness of the nurses. And a chaplain who does his duty will also have an influence of no small value with the medical staff itself.

Another ministry to the sick of a more special

kind is that of a chaplaincy to a mental hospital. It is curious that at a time when doctors and students, many of them most Christian men, are devoting a quite remarkable attention to problems of moral psychology—the relation of the mind and the body, the problems of delinquency and crime, often studied of necessity in abnormal forms, there are not more clergy who feel the attractiveness of a chaplain's post in a mental hospital, where, without in any way encroaching on the doctor's ground, he can watch the development of character, and the causation of abnormality and crime at work, with the sympathy, readily given, of the medical officer concerned. And apart from this, so to speak, scientific motive, the sufferings and limitations of the mentally afflicted, whether children or adult, are so pitiable that they make a special appeal to the sympathy and help of a Christian minister, who, by his spirit of confidence and understanding courage, can do much to help the sad unhappy people.

Another sphere in which the opportunity of a clergyman in institutional work is very great and full of interest is the sphere offered to prison chaplains. Here, too, it is very clear that the work of a chaplain is very far from being restricted to what are sometimes looked upon as purely clerical duties. A man who wishes to be a chaplain must, I am informed by the Prison Commissioners, have had some years' experience of parish or institutional work since ordination. He is responsible not only for holding Divine Service and ministering to the spiritual needs of

prisoners, but for a large and increasing body of duties connected with the education and welfare of prisoners, for which, under the Governor, he is especially responsible. It may be said that generally, in addition to his purely spiritual work, he takes charge of the library, assists in the organization of educational classes, and interests himself especially in the work of the Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society. At Borstal Institutions, where there is a House System, he also acts as one of the House Masters. I think you will agree that the opportunities (I do not say that they are always used), but the opportunities open to an alert, intelligent and human clergyman as chaplain to a prison or a Borstal Institution are both attractive and extensive. And I may perhaps be permitted to add that as a somewhat curious comment on the characterization of this as institutional work the chaplain has, as a matter of fact, opportunities for attention to the individual human soul which are not always so easily forthcoming in the non-institutional departments of our profession.

IV

(5) Another kind of special work which offers great opportunities to the right kind of man is the work of chaplain in the Navy, Army or Air Force. It is very important work, and in some ways gives a clergyman a chance which hardly any, if any, other branch in his calling provides for getting into pastoral relations with men of

all sorts and kinds. Those who like work amongst men and boys will find it here in a concentrated form; and for good or ill you are bound by your very position to have access to all the men who form your charge. I think it may be of interest to quote a statement of a chaplain's responsibility made some time ago, in the early days of the Army Chaplains' Organisation, by the Principal Chaplain (Dr. Gleig), and endorsed and adopted by the present Chaplain-General at his first entry into office in 1925.

"A military chaplain, whether he be stationary in a garrison or follow an army in the field, is in many respects so peculiarly circumstanced that more than ordinary zeal in his Master's service, tempered by exceeding discretion, is required to direct him in fulfilment of his duties as well as in the general tone of his manners.

"He has to deal with young men taken almost exclusively from the humblest classes of society or with gentlemen full of animal spirits, and accustomed to put but slight control on their passions and impulses, to induce in whose minds a reverence for the great truths of revealed religion, which shall not degenerate into fanaticism, is a noble but not an easy undertaking.

"He has a thousand eyes upon him, which, although they are not avowedly on the watch to detect evil, never fail to observe whatever may be objectionable in his deportment. His lightest words are remembered, his most indiff-

erent actions commented upon, his style of dress and manner of conversation scrutinized, and his whole bearing discussed daily in all circles. Not that there is a malicious feeling towards him anywhere, far from it. I believe, on the contrary, that the office of a clergyman is nowhere held in higher reverence than amongst military men. But to excite this feeling in his own favour the individual clergyman must be such as the soldier expects to find him, and the soldier's expectations in this respect are not unreasonable.

"The soldier, being exact in the performing of his own duties, and going through them, however apparently trivial, as if they deserved his attention, naturally looks for the same habits of thinking and acting in his chaplain."

I need not say more about the Army chaplain's responsibility—but with regard to his work I have this official statement from the Deputy Chaplain-General (1927):

"The Chaplain-General's constant endeavour is to set a very high ideal of the service demanded of chaplains. He constantly insists that when all the Army Regulations concerning chaplains and their work are fulfilled, the Chaplain is but at the beginning of his work. He must identify himself with the life of the men, share in their recreations, know them personally, keeping ever in his mind his spiritual work, and using all these things to lift men nearer

to God. Recently a new syllabus of Scriptural instruction for day-schools, extending over a period of three years, has been approved and is now with the printers. This has been drawn up by the Chaplain-General and will be used in all Army day-schools.

"We have thus secured for soldiers' children, moving from one station to another, a continuous course of instruction. At their new station they will continue their studies exactly where they left off at their last station, whether it be at home or abroad.

"In addition to this all chaplains have opportunity at least once a week of giving instruction in the tenets of their own Church. This is, of course, in addition to the instruction given in the Sunday Schools.

"The chaplains are responding splendidly to the demands that are made upon them, and I venture to say that never in the history of the Department has the work been better done, the opportunities so great, or the results so encouraging.

"Another matter which the Chaplain-General constantly stresses is the need for careful preparation for the pulpit. Both officers and men are peculiarly responsive to preaching of a practical, manly and truly spiritual type, and chaplains are constantly reminded of this.

"Recently the religious instruction of recruits has been gone into very carefully, and special opportunities are now given to chaplains in this important department of their work.

"A new development, which promises to be most fruitful for good, is that of special lectures to officers by chaplains. Of course it is not every man who is capable of this very delicate task, but wherever it has been tried it has been appreciated by officers of all ranks, and has had most encouraging results."

The work of a chaplain in the Royal Navy is equally responsible and equally varied. There are at present (1927) some eighty-one permanent chaplains, who are employed not only in sea-going ships in all parts of the world but in Dockyards at home and abroad, in Naval and Marine Barracks, in Hospitals and Naval Prisons, in the Naval College at Dartmouth, and in the several Training Establishments for boys at Shotley, Devonport and Portsmouth. As you will readily see, a Naval chaplain's work, by reason of his service in a ship, and the limited space which a ship involves, is even more in the midst of his men than a chaplain in the Army or the Air Force; and a good chaplain is, without doubt, given a very cordial welcome by both officers and men. And I might add also from a statement sent me from the Chaplain of the Fleet that in most of the large recently built battleships, and even in some of the smaller vessels, it has been found possible to set aside a space for a chapel. These chapels have proved of the greatest value, as they provide quiet and helpful surroundings for celebrations of the Holy Communion, and for voluntary religious services and classes. They are, he says,

much used and valued by the men for private devotions.

The chaplains in the Royal Air Force are a separate and a very gallant service—but I think that I have said enough about the general conditions under which chaplains to the Forces work to make detailed treatment of this branch unnecessary. This is a work of special importance, and special difficulty—demanding the very best men.

V

I have only named a few of the many channels, non-parochial in character, through which a priest can follow his vocation; and there are others, such as chaplaincies to British residents on the Continent, which offer opportunities no less absorbing than those I have named.

Indeed there is no dearth of opportunities, in England and abroad, to fit most gifts which men take with them into the life of the priest. There are also certain financial or business posts in the province or diocese which are, to my mind, more fitly held by laymen than by priests; and while I will not deny that now and again there may be a priest who may rightly devote his gifts even to work which seems almost entirely lay, I think that we ought to encourage the employment of laymen in such positions, and hope for the development of a sort of ecclesiastical service of laymen. But speaking generally I hope that I have shown you that there is a far greater variety of work in the

calling of a clergyman, and far greater scope for the specialist in different spheres, than we usually imagine.

VI

Let me close by referring to one special vocation, not very common indeed in our church, but not for that reason to be overlooked or undervalued, the vocation to the religious life. There are some dozen communities for men in the Church of England, and all owe their start to the impetus given by Father Benson, of Cowley, just sixty years ago. The declaration which he put forth at the beginning of the Cowley Brotherhood gives expression to the principles of devotion and self-discipline by which the whole Community movement was inspired:

> "The Society of the Mission Priests of St. John the Evangelist has been commenced in humble submission, as it is devoutly hoped, to a call of Almighty God.
>
> "The Society has been formed for the cultivation of a life dedicated to God according to the principles of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience, and will occupy itself in works both Missionary and Educational, at home and abroad, for the advancement of Christ's Kingdom, as God in His good Providence may seem to call."

"All sorts of external works, helpful and valuable, would be undertaken by a Community, some of which could hardly be otherwise attempted;

but behind all the activity of its members must be the simple and absolute surrender of self, with all one is or has, to God, to live in close and undistracted fellowship with Him, after the example and in obedience to the counsels of His Incarnate Son."

I have recommended a biography of a parish clergyman already—Canon Barnett—in order to give you a suggestive idea of work in a parish. Let me recommend the letters of another clergyman of another kind to give you an insight into the meaning of the religious life: *The Letters of Father Benson, of Cowley*, (Mowbrays, 1916). From that, more than from any similar book that I know, will you catch the fragrance as well as the power of the religious life. "If we only let people see that we are living upon a Truth, and loving it, they will soon catch the life." The religious life is by no means for every one—indeed few are called to it; but for those who have the gift of devotion, the love of prayer, and especially intercession, or the illumination of the mystic, as well as for others who feel the call to a stern asceticism, which the limits of a strict Community rule will enforce, this "religious life" offers a way which they may be glad to consider. But even so, the "religious life" (as its chief adherents never tire of recalling), in its strictest form, freed of the burden of administration and rule which comes to most of those living in the world, and to some who live the religious life yet are responsible for the daily care which its ordering for others entails, the "religious life" will take no pride

in itself or forget the basis—the material and worldly basis—on which it has to be built. We are all, in all grades of the Christian discipleship, dependent on one another—and those who go most apart for the exercise of their religious gifts are not least indebted to those whose hands and thoughts are busy with the cares of the world. Let us listen to St. Gregory, and apply what he says not only to contemplatives or monks, but as widely as the thought allows; and let his words beget a greater tolerance in us all for those who bear rule in the rough and tumble of the Church:

"There are some, who, if they have made ever so small a beginning in spiritual conversation, on observing that their rulers fix their thoughts only on worldly and temporal objects, begin to blame the disposition of supreme Providence as if they were improperly appointed to rule, since they set an example of worldly conversation. But because the power of office cannot be exercised without our engaging in worldly cares, therefore Almighty God frequently imposes the burden of rule on hard and laborious hearts, in order that the tender minds of spiritual men may be released from worldly cares; in order that the one may be more safely concealed from the bustle of the world, the more willingly the others employ themselves in worldly anxieties.

"And how properly this is ordered in the Church by divine appointment is signified by the very construction of the tabernacle. For

Moses is commanded by the voice of God to weave curtains of fine linen and scarlet and blue, for the covering of the Holy of Holies within. And he was ordered to spread, for the covering of the tabernacle, curtains of goats' hair and skins, to sustain the rain and wind and dust. What then do we understand by the skins and goats' hair, with which the tabernacle is covered, but the gross minds of men, which are sometimes hard though they be placed on high in the Church by the secret judgments of God? And because they are not afraid of being employed in worldly concerns they must needs bear the winds and storms of temptation which arise from the opposition of this world. But what is signified by the blue, scarlet, and fine linen, but the life of holy men, delicate, but brilliant? And while it is carefully concealed in the tabernacle under goats' hair and skins, its beauty is preserved entire. For in order that the fine linen may shine, the scarlet glitter, and the blue be resplendent with azure brilliance, the skins and the goats' hair endure the rains, the winds, the dust from above. They then who advance in great excellence within the bosom of holy Church ought not to despise the doings of their rulers when they see that they are engaged in the business of the world. For that they penetrate in safety into secret mysteries, is owing to the help of those who buffet with the storms of this world from without. For how would the fine linen retain the grace of its

brightness if the rain were to touch it? Or what splendour of brightness would the scarlet or blue display should the dust light on and defile them? Let the strong texture of the goats' hair, then, be placed above, to resist dust; and the brightness of the blue, fitted for ornament, be placed beneath. Let those who are engaged in spiritual pursuits alone, adorn the Church. Let those guard her who are not wearied with the labours of the world. But let not him who now gleams with spiritual brightness within holy Church murmur against his superior, who is employed in worldly business. For if thou glitterest securely within, like scarlet, why dost thou blame the goats' hair with which thou art protected?"*

**Mor.* xxv. 38, 39. Quoted in *Western Mysticism.* Dom. Cuthbert Butler. 1922. p. 236.

CHAPTER VI

CLERICAL SUBSCRIPTION

One special question remains for treatment in this last lecture. It concerns the relation of the modern parson to modern criticism; and, to be particular, the nature and meaning of clerical subscription.

The question is important. Not a few of those who wish and intend to be ordained are uncertain about it. And, besides these, there are others who might be ordained and in part at least are deterred by a similar uncertainty, and even by serious misapprehension on the whole subject. Two principles, it seems to me, must be placed in the forefront. *First*, the Church of England has always made the Scriptures the test of orthodoxy; and *Second*, the Church of England is a living Church, thankfully recognising the continued presence and teaching of the living Spirit within it, and its own need of dependence on the Spirit for ever fresh help in the apprehension and expression of the truth from age to age.

When a man is ordained to the ministry of the Church according to the Order of this Church of England he is asked certain questions in the

actual Service of Ordination, and he is also bound to make a particular Declaration of Assent as a condition of being ordained. I will take the Questions and the Declaration in turn.

I

If you read the two Ordination Services you will find that they contain a number of questions about inward vocation, outward appointment, devotion, the ministry of the Doctrine and Sacraments and the Discipline of Christ, peaceableness and obedience to authority. But the Question with which I am specially concerned relates to belief in the Scriptures. The Services for the Ordering of Deacons and the Ordering of Priests alike have it. But they have it in different forms. The candidate for the Priesthood is asked:

> Are you persuaded that the holy Scriptures contain sufficiently all Doctrine required of necessity for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ? and are you determined, out of the said Scriptures, to instruct the people committed to your charge, and to teach nothing, as required of necessity to eternal salvation, but that which you shall be persuaded may be concluded and proved by the Scripture?

and he replies:

> I am so persuaded, and have so determined by God's grace.

Here it will be observed that the Question is comprehensive and general, and dwells on the positive contents of the Bible. It does not, for example, say anything about "literal" or "verbal" inspiration, or suggest that every word or every book is equally profitable or equally inspired. On the contrary, it treats the Scriptures as the vehicle of a revelation, and it asks the candidate to agree that it *contains sufficiently* all Doctrine required of necessity for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

The Question in the Ordering of Deacons, as at present framed, is briefer and blunter. It is as follows:

> Do you unfeignedly believe all the Canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testament?

and the reply is:

> I do believe them.

This Question if read by itself may be misunderstood as requiring a more particular Assent than the Question to Priests. I do not myself understand the Question in this way—but that the misunderstanding is common and hurtful is proved, amongst other things, by the petitions addressed to the Bishops by distinguished theological teachers and others a few years ago, asking for a change of words. It is therefore of particular significance and importance that the Question to Deacons has

in the Revised Prayer Book been put in a form which places the attitude of the Church beyond all doubt. The new Prayer Book (in which the Ordination Service is not alternative, but the only Service) contains the following Question (instead of the old) to those who are to be ordained Deacons:

> Do you unfeignedly believe all the Canonical Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament, as given of God to convey to us in many parts and in divers manners the revelation of Himself which is fulfilled in our Lord Jesus Christ?

and the answer is:

> I do.

Here you have a clear assertion of certain principles of great importance in determining the clergyman's Declaration of his belief. The new form shows that the Assent is general, relating to the Bible as a whole, and not to individual words, sentences, or books in isolation from the whole of which they form part. It takes for granted that the Bible is the vehicle of the Christian revelation speaking of the Scriptures "as given of God *to convey to us* . . . the revelation, etc," in other words, the vessel used by God for giving the Divine treasure to man as man is able to receive it, from generation to generation. It accepts the principles of a progressive revelation with the corollaries of progressive human understanding of the gift of God, and of a differentiation between the various parts of the Bible, and the various

statements made in it. And it makes it clear that the object of the Bible is not scientific instruction, but spiritual guidance—the conveying to us in many parts and in divers manners the revelation of God which is fulfilled in our Lord Jesus Christ. It also implicitly accepts those modern methods of biblical criticism which have been commended to clergy and laity alike by the highest Church authorities, and perhaps not least plainly and persuasively in the Bishops' Report on the "Critical Study of Holy Scripture" commended to the consideration of all Christian people by the Lambeth Conference of 1897. That Report recorded the unfaltering conviction of the Bishops "that the Divine authority and unique inspiration of the Holy Scriptures cannot be injuriously affected by the reverent and reasonable use of criticism in investigating the structure and composition of the different books." And, in addition, while deprecating all reckless and impatient dogmatism, the same Report expressed the belief of the Bishops "that the critical study of every part of the Bible is the plain duty of those Christian teachers and theologians who are capable of undertaking it."*

To sum up the conclusions which may be drawn from the Ordination Questions regarding the faith of the candidate we may, I think, fairly say three things.

1. The Church of England regards the Scriptures as containing sufficiently all Doctrine required

*The Five Lambeth Conferences, 1867-1908, S.P.C.K. 1920. pp. 218-219.

of necessity for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

2. The Church of England regards the Scriptures as the vehicle of a progressive revelation progressively understood.

3 The Church of England is not afraid of the results of modern criticism reverently, patiently, and confidently pursued without arbitrary presuppositions.*

II

In addition to the Question referred to above, to which he must reply, each candidate has to make a Declaration of Assent as a preliminary to his being ordained. This is a Solemn Declaration involving, as has been pointed out, a two-fold obligation, (1) of belief, and (2) of adherence to the forms of worship duly authorised by the Church.

The second obligation, important though it is, does not come before us at the moment. I would ask you to concentrate altogether on the first.

In appreciating the significance of the Declaration an understanding of its history is all important. Subscription (to the Forty-Three Articles) is said to have been first publicly enjoined upon the clergy in 1553, but can hardly have been enforced, as Edward VI died within a month of the issue of his mandate. In 1571, by the action of

**The Declaration of Assent.* Bishop Edgar Gibson. S.P.C.K. 1918. p. 1.

Convocation and Parliament, assent was required to the Thirty-Nine Articles. In 1604 the Canons required subscription to "The Three Articles," one relating to the supremacy of the Crown, the second to the Prayer Book and the Ordinal, while the third was as follows (see Canon xxxvi):

> "That he alloweth the Book of Articles of Religion agreed upon by the Archbishops and Bishops of both provinces, and by the whole clergy in the Convocation holden at London in the year of our Lord God 1562; and that he acknowledgeth all and every the Articles therein contained, being in number nine-and-thirty, besides the ratification to be agreeable to the Word of God."

On the restoration of Charles II, subscription to the Articles was universally imposed on the clergy with more stringency than ever. The Act of Uniformity of 1662 added to the obligatory assent to the Three Articles referred to above, a stringent Declaration of Assent to the Book of Common Prayer, which was required not on ordination but on institution of a benefice. It ran as follows:

> "I, A.B., do hereby declare my unfeigned assent and consent to all and everything contained and prescribed in and by the book intituled the Book of Common Prayer, and administration of the Sacraments and other rites and ceremonies of the Church, according

to the use of the United Church of England and Ireland: together with the Psalter or Psalms of David, pointed as they are to be sung or said in churches; and the form or manner of making, ordaining, and consecrating of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons."

Such were the formulas in force down to 1865. In that year, mainly owing to the effective pressure of Archbishop Tait when Bishop of London, who pointed out "the scruples and uneasiness of mind" caused to clergy and to possible candidates for ordination by the existing Declarations, a single general formula was introduced. The object of this new form of Declaration was declared by the Home Secretary of the day (Sir George Grey) to be "that there should be a declared agreement on the part of those who enter the Church with the doctrines of the Church, and an avowal of their intention to conform to the liturgy and ritual of the Church." The necessary Parliamentary and Canonical sanctions were obtained and so it came about, in the words of the present Archbishop of Canterbury,* that "In lieu of expressing in several successive sets of words his 'unfeigned assent and consent to all and everything' within the covers of the Prayer Book, and to an acknowledgment that 'all and every one of the Articles, being in number nine-and-thirty, besides the Ratification, are agreeable to the Word of God,' a clergyman has now on his ordination to declare once for all as follows:

**The Declaration of Assent.* Gibson. p. 24.

"I assent to the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion and to the Book of Common Prayer, and of Ordering of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons; I believe the doctrine of the Church of England as therein set forth to be agreeable to the Word of God; and in public prayer and administration of the Sacraments I will use the form in the said book prescribed and none other, except so far as shall be ordered by lawful authority."*

III

What does this Declaration of Assent imply? The quotations given by Bishop Gibson from Anglican divines before the formula of subscription was changed, are significant enough. Thus, Archbishop Bramhall (d. 1663) writes: "We do use to subscribe them, indeed, not as Articles of Faith, but as theological verities, for the preservation of unity among ourselves; but never any son of the Church of England was obliged to swear unto them, or punished for dissenting from them in his judgment, so he did not publish it by word or writing."

And again—"We do not suffer any man to reject the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England at his pleasure; yet neither do we look upon them as essentials of saving faith, or legacies of Christ and His Apostles; but in a means, as pious

**Life of Archbishop Tait.* R. T. Davidson and W. Benham. 1891. Vol. I, p. 494.

See note at end of this lecture, giving the requirements in the Presbyterian Churches in Scotland, and in the Roman Catholic Church.

opinions fitted for the preservation of unity; neither do we oblige any man to believe them, but only not to contradict them."

And Bishop Stillingfleet (d. 1699) expresses himself thus: "The Church of England makes no Articles of faith, but such as have the testimony and approbation of the whole Christian world of all ages, and are acknowledged to be such by Rome itself; and in other things she requires subscription to them, not as Articles of faith, but as inferior truths, which she expects a submission to, in order to her peace and tranquillity."

I would call special attention to the words used by Archbishop Bramhall to the effect that no one was "punished for dissenting from them in his judgment, so he did not publish it by word or writing;" and again, that we do not "oblige any man to believe them, but only not to contradict them."

The formula which has been in use since 1865 would seem to give an added force to such interpretations, by the emphasis which it lays on the *general* nature of assent, viz. that the doctrine set forth in the Articles, the Prayer Book and the Ordinal is "agreeable to the Word of God."

In what sense does the Declaration of Assent, how far does clerical subscription, apply to the Creeds? It is here certainly that we reach the crux of the case. The Creeds are not mentioned as such in the Declaration of Assent: they come in as integral parts of the Book of Common Prayer. It seems to me that this in itself is important. The Creeds are not, as it were, picked out and

isolated from all the rest of the Prayer Book, or even added to, or placed specifically above, the Thirty-Nine Articles. They are to the Deacon and Priest, as they are to the Layman, standards of faith which he accepts at Baptism, in the Catechism, in the Visitation of the Sick, in Holy Communion, and Morning and Evening Prayer. They are to be received, as indeed the very context in which they are found makes plain, as the general statement of the faith of the Church, and as preserving that faith in the form in which it has been handed down through the centuries. They are not individual utterances of individual belief personally chosen, but the utterances of the whole society, which the individual member accepts; and they are besides the utterances of the Church at prayer.

Moreover, we assent to the Creeds and *steadfastly believe* the Creeds as "agreeable to the Word of God." "The English Reformation," Bishop Westcott reminds us, "showed the greatest respect to antiquity, but its final appeal was to Scripture. It accepted no formulary in itself as of absolute authority: and the creeds themselves are to be received and believed because they may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture."

If I may sum up in a single paragraph what I myself conceive to be the right view in the matter, I can find no words better adapted to my purpose than these, which were submitted in the Third Preliminary Report of the Joint Committee of the Anglican and South Indian United

Church on the Union of Churches in South India, in June, 1921. They run as follows:*

"It ought to be observed first that individuals share the belief of the Church in proportion to their capacity and experience. No two persons say any Creed with precisely the same understanding. One may accept it as a whole as capable of being proved 'by most sure warrants of Holy Scripture' and as being the faith of the Church Universal throughout the ages. Some portions of the Creed he accepts in quite a different way, as having deeply influenced his own life and entered into the very heart of his thinking and feeling. With his growth in religion more and more of the Creed becomes part of his personal religious experience. But it is equally possible for him to give a conscientious assent to the clauses of the Creed either because they have entered into his religious life, or into the religious life of the Church, or simply because he believes them warranted by Holy Scripture. When clergy or others make a formal declaration of assent to the Creed this should imply at least one of these three positions towards all its clauses. It is no business of the Church to inquire curiously into the individual's state of mind on each clause. By assent the Church means real assent and real assent may take any of the above-mentioned three forms."

**Documents on Christian Unity.* G. K. A. Bell. 1924. p. 300.

IV

We are to accept the Creeds as "agreeable to the Word of God." But we have already seen that the Church of England is not afraid of the results of modern criticism of the Bible. There is much rash modern criticism, much, no doubt, that is based on "arbitrary presuppositions." But modern criticism has assuredly helped us to see degrees of inspiration, to be prepared for a distinction between a scientific and a poetic expression of truth, to think it possible that some of the miraculous events would have been differently recorded had a scientifically trained observer of to-day been present at the time they occurred. There is no doubt that the more the Gospels are studied the more clearly their fundamental veracity is proved. But this does not rule out of all possibility misunderstandings, imperfect descriptions, by the Evangelists, of the works of Jesus, who was so infinitely above the heads of his reporters.

In recent years there has been a great deal of controversy with regard to "Modernism" (so-called) and the Creeds, and in particular with regard to the Virgin Birth of our Lord. No one writing on clerical subscription at the present day can avoid some reference to the discussion. What does the Church of England require of its clergy here?

We must admit, I think, that an accredited teacher of the Church is not a mere individual free to speak or teach what he pleases. He is

entirely free to follow independent research; but if his researches lead him to conclusions outside the limits laid down in the formularies of the Church, he can hardly expect to continue as the Church's officially accredited teacher. "He must expect," as the Archbishop of Canterbury has said, "that if the boundary line of our Creeds and formularies has in their judgment been traversed, they will, without either challenging his honesty or closing his lips, decline to entrust him with the special privileges attaching to a man bidden by the authorities to be a teacher or spokesman within the Church whose formularies—as boundary lines—he has now, in their opinion transgressed."* In other words, a line has to be drawn somewhere; and the living authorities within the Church are the right persons to draw it. It is for them to determine in a particular case the difference between what is fundamental and what is not.

How does this affect the crucial point of the Virgin Birth? There is, it seems to me, a very great difference between denial and suspension of judgment, between denial and silence, not with regard to the fact of the Incarnation, but with regard to its mode. Belief in the Incarnation is the fundamental belief of a Christian. "The Godhead of Jesus Christ," said the Upper House of the Convocation of York, in May, 1922, "is not only the Rock upon which Christianity from the first has rested, but also the only valid pledge of its persistence in a changing world. No

**The Character and Call of the Church of England.* Archbishop Davidson. 1912. p. 51.

doctrine of the Incarnation appears to us adequate or even tolerable which detracts from the uniqueness of his Sonship." It is the very essence of the Church's faith that God became man in Jesus of Nazareth, that the Word became Flesh, that in the great language of the Nicene Creed there is "one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, Begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God." It is not tolerable for a Christian minister to deny these statements or to suspend his judgment as to whether or no they are true.

But must the Church refuse to admit to her ministry, or expel from it, those who, holding this fundamental belief most firmly, wish to suspend judgment as to the mode of our Lord's birth? Is the literal and express acceptance of the Virgin Birth absolutely indispensable to a true faith in the Incarnation?

One of the most eminent of our New Testament Scholars, Dr. Armitage Robinson, in *Some Thoughts on the Incarnation*, wrote a prefatory letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1903, when a pronouncement from the Episcopate was demanded "to the effect that the Virgin-birth is a cardinal doctrine of the Christian faith." Let me quote the weighty words which he used on the matter.

> "If the Bishops were asked to declare that the Incarnation is a cardinal doctrine of the faith, such a statement would be superfluous indeed, but it would be true. But to say that the historical fact of the Virgin-birth is a

> cardinal doctrine of the faith is to use language which no Synod of Bishops, so far as I am aware, has ever ventured to use. It is to confuse the Incarnation with the special mode of the Incarnation in a way for which Christian theology offers no precedent." (*op. cit.* p. xiii).

It would certainly seem strange to make an *articulus stantis aut cadentis ecclesiae*, a belief which, however much it may commend itself to our own minds, has, Dean Robinson reminds us, "no direct expression in the writings of the two great teachers who, above all others, have expounded to us the doctrine of the Incarnation—St. Paul and St. John." (*ib.* p. viii).

It seems to me that the words which I have quoted from Dr. Armitage Robinson are of the greatest importance. There can be little doubt that for very many, perhaps for most, of the laity and clergy of the Church of England belief in the Virgin Birth is intimately bound up with faith in Christ and the Incarnation. But the Incarnation is separable in thought from the Virgin Birth; and as it was possible in the first days for an Apostle to believe in the Incarnation and to be silent with regard to the Virgin Birth, so it cannot be regarded as intolerable that a Church member, whether layman or cleric, should to-day believe wholeheartedly in the Incarnation and yet feel a very genuine difficulty about the Virgin Birth. A Christian man may endorse entirely the substantial meaning of the words in St. Luke, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of

the Most High shall overshadow thee: wherefore also that which is to be born shall be called holy, the Son of God." All this is, it has been said, deeply metaphorical and symbolical, and carries us into regions where thought is baffled. Yet must a man who refuses to say more than this, or is reluctant to regard the accounts of the Virgin Birth in St. Matthew and St. Luke as exact and scientific historical narrative, must such a man be denied admission to the ministry, or be expelled from it? I would claim, with all humility and all sincerity, that he ought not to be denied admission, and that he ought not to be expelled.

But, after all, the point which it is important to establish is the attitude of the living authorities within the Church on such matters as these. They have spoken authoritatively at least on two separate occasions in quite recent years. In spite of the pressure from many quarters they have not declared that belief in the Virgin Birth is a cardinal doctrine of the Christian faith. In 1914, when the debate was most critical, the Upper House of Convocation of Canterbury reaffirmed a former Resolution of 1905, and a Resolution of the Lambeth Conference of 1908, as follows:

"We call attention to the Resolution which was passed in this House on May 10, 1905, as follows:

> 'That this House is resolved to maintain unimpaired the Catholic Faith in the Holy Trinity and the Incarnation as contained in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, and in the *Quicunque vult*, and regards the Faith there

presented, both in statements of doctrine and in statements of fact, as the necessary basis on which the teaching of the Church reposes.'

"We further desire to direct attention afresh to the following Resolution, which was unanimously agreed to by the Bishops of the Anglican Communion attending the Lambeth Conference of 1908:

'This Conference, in view of tendencies widely shown in the writings of the present day, hereby places on record its conviction that the historical facts stated in the Creeds are an essential part of the Faith of the Church.'"

But in reaffirming these Resolutions they added another:

"These Resolutions we desire solemnly to reaffirm, and in accordance therewith to express our deliberate judgment that the denial of any of the historical facts stated in the Creeds goes beyond the limits of legitimate interpretation, and gravely imperils that sincerity of profession which is plainly incumbent on the ministers of the Word and Sacraments. At the same time, recognizing that our generation is called to face new problems raised by historical criticism, we are anxious not to lay unnecessary burdens upon consciences, nor unduly to limit freedom of thought and inquiry, whether among clergy or among laity. We desire, therefore,

to lay stress on the need of considerateness in dealing with that which is tentative and provisional in the thought and work of earnest and reverent students." (April 29, 1914.)

I would call special attention to the importance of the word *denial*, and the reserve shown in the phrase *gravely imperils*.

Again, in 1922, after the Girton Conference of Modern Churchmen, the Upper House of Convocation of Canterbury ordered the following Resolution to be conveyed to the Memorialists, who had approached it:

"This House declares its conviction that adhesion to the teaching of the Catholic Church as set forth in the 'Nicene' Creed—and in particular concerning the eternal pre-existence of the Son of God, His true Godhead, and His Incarnation—is essential to the life of the Church, and calls attention to the fact that the Church commissions as its Ministers those only who have solemnly expressed such adhesion.

"Further, this House recognises the gain which arises from inquiry, at once fearless and reverent, into the meaning and expression of the Faith, and welcomes every aid which the thoughtful student finds in the results of sound historical and literary criticism, and of modern scientific investigation of the problems of human psychology; and it deprecates the mere blunt denunciation of contributions made by earnest men in their endeavour to bring new light to

bear upon these difficult and anxious problems. At the same time it sees a grave and obvious danger in the publication of debatable suggestions as if they were ascertained truths, and emphasises the need of caution in this whole matter, especially on the part of responsible teachers in the Church." (2 May, 1922.)*

Here, I would call attention to (1) the fact that, while by the use of the words "in particular" emphasis is concentrated on the teaching of the Catholic Church concerning "the eternal pre-existence of the Son of God, His true Godhead, and His Incarnation," there is no explicit mention of the Virgin Birth; (2) the recognition of the gain from inquiry at once fearless and reverent; (3) the warning against blunt denunciation of earnest students endeavouring to bring new light to bear; and (4) a caution against *publication* of *debatable suggestions* as if they were ascertained truths.

VI

I have felt it impossible to give a set of lectures on the Modern Parson without trying to deal in some way with a problem which is certainly very prominent in the minds of many Christians. But that is not the note on which I wish to end. Faith is something more than intellectual conviction. It is also a moral and spiritual affirmation

*For the text of these Declarations in a convenient form see *The Bishops and Modern Criticism.* S.P.C.K. 1922.

covering "an inner disposition and a living experience, a whole attitude which gives life its meaning and its value" (Dr. Cyril Norwood). The preacher of the Christian Gospel has a truth to teach, which above all other things is positive, affirmative and strong. The Christian religion is a way of life, and the decisive thing about any man, whether layman or cleric, is whether he is trying to look at the world, and do the work which he has to do, according to the spirit of Christ. Beside this it is surely true to say that some of the questions about which we have just been speaking are far less important than controversialists on either side make out. The great thing is that we should all sincerely, humbly, and in the spirit of prayer, be seeking to make Him the real Master of our lives, and seeking also as pastors and teachers to lead others to Him and the more abundant life which He gives.

NOTE

The introduction of the new Declaration of Assent, as stated in the foregoing lecture, is of such importance that it may be of interest to describe the action taken in comparatively recent years by the Presbyterian Churches in Scotland, and the recent, though very different, action taken by the Roman Catholic Church.

The Presbyterian Churches in Scotland

All branches of the Presbyterian Churches in Scotland have inherited from the past the Westminster Confession of Faith as their "principal subordinate standard," and until the closing decades of last century the adherence of office-bearers thereto—Ministers and Elders alike—was secured by means of a rigid formula of subscription. But in the middle of the last century the need of some relaxation came to be felt.

Accordingly, in 1879, the United Presbyterian Church passed a Declaratory Act anent the Confession of Faith, the purpose of which was (1) "to set forth more fully and clearly the view which the Synod takes of the teaching of Holy Scripture," with the result that the rigour of the Calvinistic doctrine of the Confession was definitely

abated, and (2) to make clear the distinction between substance and accident in so elaborate a doctrinal standard as that of Westminster, it being left to the living Church to determine always, from time to time, within which category any particular tenet comes.

Similarly, in 1892, the Free Church of Scotland, the union of which with the United Presbyterian Church forms the present United Free Church of Scotland, passed another Declaratory Act, with exactly the same purpose and result. Thus, the preamble states:

> "Whereas it is expedient to remove difficulties and scruples which have been felt by some in reference to the declaration of belief required from persons who receive licence or are admitted to office in this Church, the General Assembly, with consent of Presbyteries, declare as follows:"

and the two final sections of the Declaration are as follows:

> "That this Church disclaims intolerant or persecuting principles, and does not consider her office-bearers, in subscribing the Confession, committed to any principles inconsistent with liberty of conscience and the right of private judgment."

> "That while diversity of opinion is recognised in this Church on such points in the Confession as do not enter into the substance of the Reformed

Faith therein set forth, the Church retains full authority to determine, in any case which may arise, what points fall within this description, and thus to guard against any abuse of this liberty to the detriment of sound doctrine, or to the injury of her unity and peace."

The Church of Scotland met the same difficulty in another way, more closely resembling the method adopted by the Church of England. In 1905 it obtained leave from Parliament, not to alter the Confession or to draw up an Act Declaratory of the sense in which it was understood and adhered to, but to relax the formula of subscription thereto.

The old formula of subscription used in the Church of Scotland until 1910 was as follows:

"I declare the confession of faith, approven by former General Assemblies of this Church, and ratified by law in the year 1690, to be the confession of my faith, and I own the doctrine therein contained to be the true doctrine, which I will constantly adhere to."

"As likewise, etc." (*exactly as in present formula below*).

"As also, etc." (*exactly as in present formula below*).

The present "formula to be subscribed by Ministers, Licentiates and Elders" is now as follows, in accordance with Acts of Assembly in 1910 and 1912:

"I hereby subscribe the Confession of Faith, declaring that I accept it as the Confession of this Church, and that I believe the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith contained therein.

"As likewise I own and acknowledge Presbyterian Church government, as now and for long time settled by law, to be the only government of this Church, and I will submit thereto and concur therewith, and never endeavour, directly or indirectly, the prejudice or subversion thereof.

"As also I will observe that uniformity of worship and of the administration of all public ordinances in this Church as the same are at present performed and allowed, or shall hereafter be declared by authority of the same."

Once more a distinction is drawn between that which is fundamental and that which is not fundamental, and the determination of the distinction in the given case is left to the living Church.

The Roman Catholic Church

By the *Motu Proprio* of Pope Pius X dated September 1, 1910, and entitled *Sacrorum Antistitum* all candidates for Holy Orders (*clerici majoribus ordinibus initiandi*) as well as confessors, parish priests, canons, and other ecclesiastics, are required to take the following Oath against the errors of Modernism, having previously also made their Profession of Faith according to the formula provided by Pope Pius IV (1559–1565), viz.:

the *Professio fidei Tridentina* with the addition of the Definitions of the Vatican Council (1869–1870).

The Latin text of the Oath may be found in H. Denzinger *Enchiridion Symbolorum Definitionum et Declarationum de rebus fidei et morum* (Herder), 14th and 15th Edition, 1922, pp. 589–592; the *Professio Fidei Tridentina* will be found in the same book, pp. 327 *f.*; the Definitions of the Vatican Council, *ib.* pp. 473 *f.*; the Decree *Lamentabili* (3 July, 1907) and the Encyclical *Pascendi dominici gregis* (7 September 1907)—referred to in the Oath—*ib.* pp. 538 *f.*, and pp. 545 f.

JUSIURANDUM CONTRA ERRORES MODERNISMI

[TRANSLATION]

Oath Against the Errors of Modernism

"I . . . firmly embrace and accept all and singular the things which have been defined, asserted, and set forth by the unerring teaching-power of the Church; particularly those articles of doctrine which are in direct conflict with the errors of the present time. *First*, I confess that God, who is the beginning and end of all things, can assuredly be known and also proved by the natural light of reason by the things which are made, i.e. by the visible works of creation, as a

cause by its effects. *Secondly*, I admit and acknowledge the outward arguments for religion, i.e. Divine facts, and especially miracles and prophecies, as most sure signs of the divine origin of the Christian religion, and I hold the same (arguments or facts) to be entirely adapted to the understanding of all ages and all men, of this time as well as of others. *Thirdly*, I believe, with a like firm faith, that the Church, which is the guardian and the teacher of the revealed word, was directly and immediately founded by means of the true, historical Christ himself, whilst he was among us, and that the same was built upon Peter, the prince of the apostolic hierarchy, and upon his successors for ever. *Fourthly*, I receive with sincerity the doctrine of faith transmitted by the Apostle, through the orthodox Fathers with the same meaning and the same signification throughout, even unto us; and for this cause I utterly reject the heretical fiction of a development of doctrines, which pass from one meaning to another, differing from that (meaning) which the Church had held before; and in like manner I condemn all error whereby for the divine deposit, delivered to the Spouse of Christ, and to be kept by her faithfully, is substituted an invention of philosophy, or a creation of the human consciousness, which (consciousness) has been fashioned little by little by human effort, and is hereafter to be brought to perfection by an unceasing progress. *Fifthly*, I hold most surely and do sincerely confess that faith is not a blind sense of religion evolved from the depths of a sub-

conscious self, (which is) morally influenced by the pressure of the heart and the bending of the will, but is a true assent of the understanding to truth received from without by hearing, whereby we believe those things to be true which have been spoken, testified, and revealed by a personal God, our Maker and Lord, by reason of the authority of God who is above all things true.

Moreover, I submit with due reverence, and heartily concur in all condemnations, declarations, and prescriptions contained in the Encyclical *Pascendi* and in the Decree *Lamentabili*, particularly in regard to what is called the history of dogma. I reject the error of those who say that the Faith of the Church as now set forth may disagree with history, and that the Catholic dogmas in their modern signification cannot be set beside the original truths of the Christian religion. I condemn and reject the opinion of those who say that a Christian man of learning acts in two characters, the one that of a believer, the other that of a historical student, so that the historical student may hold that which is at variance with the faith of the believer, or may construct premises from which it follows that the dogmas are false or doubtful, so long as they are not directly denied. In like manner I reject that method of determining and interpreting Holy Scripture, which, taking less account of the tradition of the Church, and of the proportion of the faith, and of the ruling of the Apostolic See, binds itself to the invention of the Rationalists, and with no less license than rashness takes textual

criticism for its sole and supreme authority. Moreover, I reject the opinion of those who hold that a teacher of the transmission of historical theology, or any one who writes on the subject, should begin by setting aside all preconceived opinion of the supernatural origin of the Catholic tradition, and of the divine help promised for the perpetual preservation of each truth of revelation; also that the writings of the Fathers separately are to be interpreted on scientific principles alone, apart from any sacred authority, with the same liberty of judgment with which any profane documents are examined. Generally speaking, in fact, I profess to have no sympathy with the Modernist error which holds that there is nothing Divine in the sacred tradition; or, far worse, which admits the same, but in a Pantheistic sense; resulting in nothing beyond bare and simple fact, on a level with the ordinary facts of history—the school founded by Christ and His Apostles being carried on through the following centuries by the unaided industry, skill, and wit of men. Accordingly, I hold fast the faith of the Fathers, and will hold it to the last breath of my life, concerning the assured gift of the truth, which is, and was, and always will be, in the apostolic succession of the episcopate; not (all owing) that that should be held which may seem best adapted to the culture of any particular age, but that the absolute and unchangeable truth, which was preached from the beginning through the Apostles, may be none otherwise believed and none otherwise understood.

All these things I promise that I will faithfully, and wholly, and sincerely keep, and will maintain inviolably, not departing from them in any particular whether in teaching or in any other manner by word or writing, so I promise and swear, so help me God, etc."

APPENDIX

A Note on Clerical Stipends

It is not easy to give the exact amounts of the salaries or stipends which a clergyman may expect at the present day, and this is, of course, specially true with regard to incumbents. At the same time it is obviously desirable that a book on *The Modern Parson* should contain some reliable information on a subject which is, after all, of considerable importance. Accordingly an attempt is made in this Appendix to state the facts as accurately and with as much regard to the average as possible.

I. Parochial Clergy

Assistant Curates. The payment of a *deacon* depends a good deal on the varying cost of living in different parts of the country. It should not be below £200, and might be anything between £200 and £250 per annum.

For *deacons* and *priests* together, according to an official return* for the year ending December 31,

* *Special Clergy Commission Report,* National Assembly of the Church of England, 1927.

1926, out of a total number of 4,022 assistant curates 190 received a stipend of over £300 a year, 1,155 a stipend of £300—£251, 1,901 a stipend of £250–£201, and 776 (of whom 129 were part-time clergymen) a stipend of £200 and under.

In addition to their stipends, 348 assistant curates received in 1926 gifts in the shape of Easter offerings, Whitsuntide offerings, or some other similar gift.

Incumbents. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners in 1927 adopted a scheme whereby the *minimum* net incomes for *all* livings, however small in population and whatever the patronage, should, on certain conditions, be £300 per annum. The minimum net incomes for livings with a population of 300—4,000 whose patronage is unsaleable, £350: and the minimum net income for livings (whose patronage is unsaleable) with a population of 4,000 or more, £400. The Vicarage house in almost all cases goes with the benefice.

This is the only scale at present reached for incumbents of parishes in all dioceses in England, and, while welcome, does not go by any means the whole distance necessary. It should, however, be added that in certain dioceses, partly in conjunction with and partly supplementary to the scheme of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, a minimum net income has been adopted as a definite standard, and in certain cases guaranteed. Thus, the minimum of £400 per annum for all livings has been established in the diocese of Southwark.

The following facts may be stated as of interest with regard to benefices generally.

1.—According to the official return quoted above (*Special Clergy Commission Report*), for the year ending December 31, 1925, out of a total number of 12,908 incumbents 6,506 were then in receipt of an income of £400 or less.

2.—The fuller but earlier return in the Report of the Church Assembly Commission into the Property and Revenues of the Church, 1924, gives the following summarized statistics:*

Total number of benefices with a population of less than 300 . . .	2,770
Ditto of between 300 and 500 .	2,061
„ „ „ 501 and 1,000 .	2,493
„ „ „ 1,001 and 4,000 .	3,090
„ „ „ 4,001 and 10,000 .	2,330
„ above 10,000 . . .	667

Total number of benefices with a net income of £300 and under . .	4,087
Ditto of between £301 and £500 .	6,450
„ „ „ £501 and £700 .	1,747
„ „ over £700 . . .	1,128

It should be noted that the Report of this Commission elsewhere suggests (*a*)† "that a population of four hundred to five hundred is, with some exceptions, the minimum which should constitute a separate parish; and even this standard should be regarded as applicable only to cases where the

* *Report of the Property and Revenues Commission.* Church Assembly, 1924. Page 15.

† Page 28 of *Report.*

population is widely scattered; in more populous places, and especially in urban districts, there are, no doubt, many cases in which an incumbent, without a curate and with even a larger population than 1,000, would not find himself overworked;" and (*b*) "one of the most urgent reforms to be aimed at is a more equal and equitable distribution of incomes with reference to the duties to be performed," e.g. by union, or grouping, or diversion of emoluments from richer to poorer benefices.

The reforms thus indicated become all the more necessary in the light of the new charges incidental to recent legislation with regard to Tithe, Dilapidations on Vicarage House (for which the annual charge averages about £20 per house),* and Clergy Pensions.

II. Non-Parochial Clergy

(In most cases two or three years' previous experience in a parish is required.)

Air Force Chaplains, commencing at 16*s.* per diem (i.e. £292 per annum) all found, rising 2*s.* 10*d.* per diem every three years. Allowances for married Chaplains of thirty or more 11*s.* per diem. Pension after twenty years' service, normally at fifty, approximately £470 per annum.

Army Chaplains, from approximately £360 a year *plus* allowances for rations, service and lodging, making a total of about £605 value for a married

* *Special Clergy Commission Report*, p. 8.

man and £515 value for a bachelor; rising to an approximate total value of £1,145 for married, £1,084 for unmarried men, according to rank; with a maximum pension on retirement of £300 to £800 according to rank.

Hospital Chaplains. Conditions vary according to the size of the Hospital and local circumstances. In London, speaking generally, the Chaplain of a Hospital may expect to receive the equivalent stipend of a minimum standard vicarage, i.e. £400 plus quarters; and an Assistant Chaplain may expect the standard salary of an Assistant Curate with some experience, i.e. £250 with or without rooms.

Indian Chaplains, commencing 600 rupees per mensem, rising by regular increments to 1,050 rupees and £30 "Overseas pay" per mensem. Retiring pension after twenty-three years' service £480 per annum.

Minor Canons. The stipends vary considerably, and are sometimes with, and sometimes without, a house. In some Cathedrals the Minor Canon is expected to undertake outside work (with remuneration), but not in others. To give instances of stipend, according to the *Report of the Cathedrals Commission*, 1927, a Minor Canon at Durham receives £250 per annum, with house; at Wells, £150 with house; at Worcester £200; at Lichfield £155; at York £440 without a house. In some cases a Minor Canon holding also the Office of Sacrist or Precentor or Assistant Librarian receives a further remuneration.

Naval Chaplains, from approximately £310 with all found, to £912 according to seniority of service, with a pension after twenty years of service, according to rank and length of service, of £375–£790 per annum.

Overseas Service and Missionaries. Conditions of service overseas are difficult to specify as they vary according to place and circumstances. Chaplains serving abroad, but not in connection with a Society, would generally get about £300 per annum if single, to meet cost of living, but leaving little margin: where living expenses are much greater the salary would be larger, but again with very little margin. A priest going abroad in connection with an established Missionary Society would receive a sufficient stipend for decent living, and additional allowances on marriage, with help in cases of sickness or disablement.

Theological College Chaplains. Average £200–£250 per annum, with board and lodging.

III. Pensions

(Intended particularly, but not exclusively, for Parochial clergy.)

By "The Clergy Pensions' Measure, 1926" all clergy, whether beneficed or not, "who (1) receive an annual stipend exceeding £100, and (2) are under fifty-five at the time the Measure becomes operative, shall on retirement at or after age seventy be entitled as a matter of right to a pension at the

standard rate of £200 per annum after forty years' service."

In addition certain smaller pensions may be given in case of retirement before seventy through permanent total disablement.

Further, in the event of death before seventy, all contributions paid will be returned plus compound interest at the rate of 2½ per cent. per annum.

The *premium* paid by the clergy to receive this pension is at the rate of 3 per cent. per annum; thus, a clergyman receiving a stipend of £300 per annum would pay a premium of £9 per annum.

The Pensions authority for the Church of England is The Church of England Pensions Board, 53 Tufton Street, S.W.1.

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